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THE FREE SPEECH: HOW GOVERNMENT CONTROLLED IT?

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Abstract

The data show that the media in the Republic of Macedonia became associates of the government propaganda, circumventing the professional and democratic principles of informing. The Government is one of the biggest advertisers in the country and there is concern that the funds are allocated to the television channels which support the Government. The collected data will be illustrated through analysis and comparison of the annual reports of the Organization “Reporters without Borders” and the annual reports of the European Commission, but this does not mean that other academic research will be excluded. The survey results show that in Macedonia the media freedom is not achieved, but on the contrary we have drastic deterioration of the freedom of expression. Because of this the media lose their mission to inform and educate their audience, regardless of any political pressure.

Key words: Republic of Macedonia; Government; Control; Media

INTRODUCTION

The freedom of speech and communication with the public are international standards that differ from those authoritarian democratic societies and their malfunction definitely shows a real picture of a democratic society. The right of the public to know, to be informed and to have an opportunity actively to participate in the processes of the society is undeniable and is part of the national and international right, but also it is part of the generally accepted, media, professional and ethical principles. The citizens and also the public exercise this right mainly through the media, which except as a platform for informing the public, serve to the public as platform for articulating the views and place for development of social debate, but also as a mean of pressure on institutions and on the centers of power so that they could act in accordance with the interests of the society. The duty of the media is to be guardians of the public interest, to protect and promote, but also to improve and take to task the office-bearers and the politicians, to disclose the cases and the events which are important for the citizens, the public and the society.

Reporting about the corruption, crime, abuses by institutions or other powers is of inherent public interest. Besides that, the democracy and the good governance, the human rights and freedoms can be listed as important areas of the public interest. However, the current situation does not indicate that the media in Macedonia are creators and guardians of the public interest. On the contrary, they increasingly serve to the narrow, particular interests, to the centers of power, and in this particular case they serve to the government and to the business. The reasons for that are numerous and they could be recognized in almost every aspects of their functioning, from which as the most important reasons can be distinguished the way of production of contents, their quality, as well as functioning of the media in the current professional and legal environment.

The numerous reports and public pleas from the international organizations, such as the Report for Progress of the European Commission or OSCE, or the assessments of the international or national professional or media organizations, through more research whose findings are included in the final analysis for media and public interest, suggest that the problems are numerous and multilayered. However, they are not result of the underdevelopment of the media system as a whole or the absence of legislation and mechanisms for its implementation. The achievement of the democratic standards in Macedonia, when it comes to the freedom of expression, during the period of 2003-2016, will be illustrated through the analysis and comparison of the annual reports published by the World Organization "Reporters without Borders" and the reports published by the European Commission for Prosperity of the Republic of Macedonia for the period 2010-2016. As a conclusion to all of this, the main priority, that is to say the freedom of the media has not been achieved yet, but on the contrary, there is deterioration of the situation.

PROBLEM STATEMENT

The Republic of Macedonia has a huge number of media, technology and personnel which enable the country to fulfill its role, to have relatively good legislation, developed systems for digital transmission of information, and carried digitalization, solid penetration of the internet and pretty much vibrant online media sphere, educational institutions for formal and continuous informal education of the media personnel, mechanisms for self-regulation and guild association. However, in practice all these elements are subject to distortion, whereupon the created anomalies and dysfunction at the end will result not only with bad performances in many aspects, but also with alienation of the media from the public interest.

On the other hand, Macedonia suffers a decline of professional and ethical standards which are seen as low. At the same time, the media is not free from the influence of power. Although the legal framework satisfies the largest international standards, in practice the situation is seen differently. Another concerning problem is the market media which is not favorable to the media who want to be independent and which cannot survive on their market, but they need help from the state. Professional standards are generally low and the media is not free from governmental influence. There are also cases where the media close to the government promote ethnic hatred and the same ones are not sanctioned. Macedonia has more than enough, even too many media (especially electronic media), which are often used by "the outsiders", and most often by the politicians in power as an argument for existence of "pluralism" in the media space. National private media (primarily

televisions) are dominant over the public media. There is almost complete absence of the non-profit electronic media, while the local media and the media of the community, some of which were shut down in the last few years, fight for survival every day. The regulation and the self-regulation follow the European media policies, but their implementation is facing serious resistance, which can be seen in the non-enforcement, impunity or selective and biased enforcement and (dis)respect by the institutions and part of the media community, as well as absence of will to create more functional media environment (Saracini 2016). The Constitution excludes censorship, but it does not exclude the efforts to influence the media that are not prone to authority.

The contest for profit, which in the last few years is predominantly acquired by the state funds (government aids), directly affects the freedom of expression, and it will be object of this scientific research. In practice, most of the mainstream media are almost entirely dependent on the instrumentation for professional and political purposes, and also the local media are entirely dependent on the politics and the businessmen at a local level.

THE MEDIA BEFORE AND AFTER THE PLURALISM

The Republic of Macedonia 24 years since its independence and pluralism still to date has failed to establish the system of impartial and independent media which will meet international standards of media. After the first publication of the newspaper “Nova Makedonija” in Macedonian language on 29th of November, 1944, was also published the first Albanian newspaper “Flaka e Vellazerimit”, in April of 1945. Radio-programs in Albanian and Turkish began to broadcast during the 1960s within the Yugoslav radio based in Belgrade. Later in Skopje, the Macedonian Radio Television, began the program in Macedonian and then broadcasted news in Albanian and Turkish (Ramet and Simkus 2013, 89). In socialist Yugoslavia, Macedonian media system was under tight state control and the absence of alternative media. With the collapse of the socialist regime system and with the advent of pluralism and democracy followed the liberalization of the media. Changes first swept the field of electronic media, which were opened many private televisions and radio stations (more than 300), most of whom worked illegally. The number of electronic media is reduced by the adoption of the first Law on Broadcasting in 1997. In 1991, the program began to broadcast the first private radio, and in 1993 opened the first private television (it was A1 TV, that stopped working in 2011). With the opening of private electronic media the monopoly public service broadcaster MRT started to wobble. Pluralism in the field of print media, however, came with the release of the private daily newspaper “Dnevnik” in 1996 (Macedonian Institute of Media 2012). In 1998 appeared the private newspaper in Albanian “Fakti” which later went out for financial reasons (Macedonian Institute of Media, 2004). The same fate later had the newspapers “Koha e Re” and “Zhurnal”. In 2014, the Government announced a competition to award concessions. Competition provoked strong reactions, especially in existing national commercial TV stations, which claimed that the market is already too fragmented and can’t stand greater number broadcasters, and this will certainly have a negative impact on the performance of existing broadcasters (Howley 2010, 118). Until January 2008, 271 electronic media operated lawfully in Macedonia (Sluzben Vesnik, 2005). According to the Agency for audio and audiovisual media services, today in Macedonia operate over 70 media (excluding print media), of which 13 broadcast programs in Albanian language.

INDIRECT GOVERNMENTAL CONTROL AND THE ROLE OF MEDIA IN DEMOCRATIC SOCIETY

Scientific theory recognizes different forms and models of governmental control over the media. Based on the theory of Lawson, about governmental control of the media, they think that in the post-communist countries there are two models of control. Firstly, the model of “direct governmental control”, that is state ownership. And secondly, the model of “indirect governmental control” (Lawson and McCann 2007). Even if the owner of the station is private, however, the government may be able to “indirectly” control news content, providing subsidize, governmental advertising, or outright bribes to encourage the private owner to bias coverage away from the commercially optimal editorial policy (Laughey 2007, 3). According to Grossman and Helpman this provided various benefits to private media in return for favorable coverage, including tax privileges, subsidized newsprint, and cash payments to journalists. As a consequence, “a plethora of pro-government newspapers could operate without serious regard to circulation, commercial advertising, or other normal requisites of financial viability” (Grossman and Helpman 2001). Conceptually, the relationship between government and private owner is analogous to a lobbying problem, though here the government plays the role of lobby and private owner the role of policy maker (Grossman and Helpman 2001). Although in the media space in Macedonia appear elements of both models, we think that the second model is more widespread and are determined in the practical part to analyze the second model, the model - “indirect governmental control over media. But if you go back to the other side, in western democracies, media is perceived in two ways, positively (as a democratic source of truth) and negatively (as a powerful manipulative of the truth). In countries where the media is entirely controlled by the government, by contrast, social and cultural sense of the media can be described in broad political sense as a means of propaganda and social control (Talbot 2007, 3). Media should function as a “market” open to all ideas and opinions regardless of their content (Cammaerts and Carpentier 2007, 191). Media has an important role in democracy. Media provides information on political issues, gives us the opportunity to speak out our opinion on various issues, giving citizens the opportunity to be a guard of policy-makers and decision-makers (Coyne and Leeson 2009, 122-123). An independent media influences as incentive for government actors to monitor the reforms that benefit the country and are related to their narrow interests. Basic logic implies that a free media provides citizens critical information regarding current affairs and political activities. Free media serves as a resource to inform their political activities, where citizens can evaluate politicians to reward or to punish them. Having the power, people to punish politicians during elections (SELDI 2002, 161)

THE FALL AND NEGATIVE REMARKS

Chronologically, the decline of Macedonia starts in 2009, when it falls from the 34th place to the 68th (Reporters without Borders, Press Freedom Index 2009). In 2011 and 2012, our country was on the 94th place and this year it is on the 118th place (Reporters without Borders, Press Freedom Index 2016). Comparing the annual reports of the Reporters without Borders, formally speaking, the inglorious 118th place on the ranging is a step forward of seven places compared to the 123rd place from the report of the Reporters

without Borders from 2014 (Reporters without Borders, Press Freedom Index, 2014). This is definitely the most negative result that our country had since we have reports of the media freedom, which is seen as a huge disappointment. “The situation with the media in Macedonia continues to be bad during 2016, which was marked by the abuse of the legal provisions of defamations and also it was also marked by the politically motivated promotion of advertising campaigns financed by the state budget” (Reporters without Borders, Press Freedom Index 2016).

According to this report, Republic of Macedonia for more consecutive years is going backwards in terms of the situation in the media, public information and freedom of expression. According to the published rankings, Republic of Macedonia in 2003 was for the first time placed in the RSF and was ranked on the 51st place from 158 monitored countries, whereupon had the higher position than some countries in this region.¹

In the period from 2004 until 2009, Macedonia is placed at even higher positions. In 2004 Macedonia was on the 49th place out of 158 ranked countries. In 2007 Macedonia is on the higher 36th place out of 164 countries, while in 2009 Macedonia reached the highest position where in a competition with even 170 countries is placed in the 34th place. However, that position according to the subsequent rankings, as well as according to the reality of the situations that are perceived in the Macedonian society in the next five years, proved to be like a swan song for the Macedonian media and for the democratic conditions. Yet in 2010 the fall of the position in the Republic of Macedonia can be noticed, since Macedonia was placed on the 68th place out of 173 monitored countries. During the period between 2011 and 2012, the situation with the media freedom in the Republic of Macedonia is obviously drastically deteriorated because Macedonia was falling down to the bottom of the table and was placed on the 94th place, and after that on the 116th place out of 178 countries on the list. According to “Reporters without Borders”, Republic of Macedonia was persuasively worse ranked in 2014 when it fell to the 123 place in the ranking out of 180 countries. These assessments are more than worrying when you consider that according to the methodology of the RSF, Republic of Macedonia in 2013 passed the boundary of the countries, which according to the parameters are ranked in the group of countries with “significant problems” in the sphere of the media freedom and public informing, and entered in the group of countries which are established to be in a “difficult situation”.

¹ As for instance, Serbia (and Montenegro) – 85th place, Croatia – 69th place, or Romania – 59th place.

Table 1: Assessment of the freedom of speech (Source: Reporters without Borders, Press Freedom Index for Republic of Macedonia 2003-2016)

	Progress of media freedom													
	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
Monitored Countries	51	49	43	45	36	42	34	68	94	116	116	123	117	118
Monitored Countries	158	167	167	164	164	170	173	178	178	179	179	180	180	180
Situation of the media (progress-regress)	-	rise	rise	fall	rise	fall	rice	fall	fall	fall	-	fall	rice	fall

Given the progress of the media reforms, the results are not satisfying, but on the other hand there is deterioration of the situation. It is a fact that the European Commission in the annual reports repeatedly asks the countries to stop this practise of the government advertisements in the pro-government media (European Commission 2015). The latest annual report for Macedonia (2015) is a serious concern despite the previous invocations for the first time as it is determined in the report. The Union emphasized that “this reform should immediately be given priority”. (European Commission 2015). As it is stated in the Report for progress of the country, the treat for fulfilment of this priority is spending of the government advertisements, which are oriented only to the pro-government media. It is almost impossible to achieve the wanted democratic standards until the media have the complete freedom in the reporting of the public affairs in the area of different corruption case, politicization of the public administration and so on, which will be difficult to fight against these occurrences without free media. The democratic standards for the information demand for full respect of the principles of independence of the media and those standards have not been achieved yet.

Table 2: Chronology of the view-points of the EU for indirect control of the government on the media (Source: European Commission, Progress Reports for Republic of Macedonia 2011 – 2015)

2011	The Government is one of the biggest advertisers in the country and there is a concern that the funds are allocated to television channels which support the government
2012	There is still concern that much of the advertisements financed by the government are directed towards the media which support the government.
2013	There is still concern about spending of the government advertisements for which a lot of people claim that they are oriented only to the pro-government media, giving them a significant financial advantage
2014	There is indirect state control of the media production through government adverts and media favoured by the government (and towards which it is inclined)
2015	Government advertising provides the largest single source of funding and has a major influence on the media market at both national and local level. There is no systematic or detailed reporting on government advertising. Moreover, the content of the intercepted communications revealed close links between government and media owners with the highest viewership and circulation, who also receive most of the funding allocated to government advertising campaigns. The “Urgent Reform Priorities” include a commitment to ensure full transparency on government advertising and to develop a mechanism for unpaid public service announcements of a truly public interest character.

THE COST OF FREE SPEECH

The Constitution excludes censorship, but the same does not preclude efforts to influence the media that are not prone to power. Since 24 years from the country's independence, there have been cases of financial control in the media and pressure being blackmailed owners about other businesses they possess (Ramadani 2013). Double standards exist only for independent media, the opposition media and the Albanian media. In Macedonia, the voice of opposition media is pale. The events are still fresh of recent years when the government has shown that it can threaten and take severe "measures" to put pressure on media that are critical of governmental programs or are close to the opposition. The biggest beneficiaries of all this game appear to be the local media close to the government and their journalists, although that they do not meet professional standards and journalistic code about information, but in exchange for the benefits, the advertising division of state institutions have agreed to conduct the newsletter performance of the biggest party that leads the state (European Commission 2010). Violence against media and journalists has become common practice of power. Intimidation of journalists who face political pressure and threats is still a serious selective problem at present² (Koha 2010). In November of 2010 the action of state bodies expressed concern in A1 Television, (Greenslade 2013) the resulting statistics showed A1 to be the most watched media in Macedonia and some other daily newspapers. Using the methods of frightening and threatening to criticism and investigative reports against A1, reached its peak with the imprisonment and deprivation of liberty of journalist Tomislav Kezharovski, using at the same time the courts as part of the governmental "campaign" against the free speech. His sentence woke drastic prestigious international media interest and considered it as an unprecedented case (Vidimliski 2013). Frightening trends in the media noted also Frank La Rue, the special reporter on freedom of opinion and expression of the UN, which in 2013 has observed the developments in the country. The closure of the A1 television and four newspapers in 2011, then weekly Focus and the investigation for the death of its editor Nikola Mladenov, as well as the case of a complaint against the journalists of Focus on transmitted statement, are four cases that La Rue says openly speak to intimidate critical media. For him is unclear why the government did not pursue a criminal investigation against the death of Mladenov (Conclusions of Accessible High-level Dialogue 2012). The findings of the international observers about informing of the media during elections, about the way for which they cover different important events, such as the publication of the so-called "bombs of the opposition", the protests of the students, the case "Spy", the case "Pooch", etc., indicate that the infiltration of the politics and business in the "creation" of the public interest in the media is already too deep and it degrades their key role and function.

One of the five points on the agenda of the political dialogue at high level that the Government started with the European Commission on 15th of March is the freedom of the media - a topic that has come under criticism in the last annual report of the Commission on the progress and by several international organizations.

² NGO "Transparency Macedonia", in its monthly report for November 2010, "concern on the occasion of the action of the state bodies A1 Television. The action of executive power under the "Transparency Macedonia" that are completely mixed jurisdictions and powers of the Public Revenue Office, MIA, financial police and various inspections, point to doubt that it is a political action, not legal background.

INDIRECT CONTROL OVER THE MEDIA IN PRACTICE

Generally institutions in R.M are not open enough to cooperate with the media. Media are always favored and selection depends on the proximity to the ruling party. As mentioned above, based on the theory of “indirect government control over the media”, in Macedonia, there are elements of this nature. A special type of financing media is dividing funds to help the independent print media, which is conducted by a committee that is appointed by the Government of the Republic of Macedonia. Funds are given once a year, without strict criteria and regularly encourage resentment among the media, which did not receive enough financial aid or assistance at all. Some of these media are dissatisfied considering this separation as a reward for media close to the authorities and the media that do little pressure (Dimitrijevska and Daskalovski 2013). The issue of governmental advertising in the media has again raised the debate on transparency of these funds, and also the continuing practice through such advertising, the independent media to be purchased. The process in which the government chooses newspapers that will be advertised is problematic and is done in a non-transparent manner and advertising revenue are often not correlated with the ratings of the medium, but the closeness of Government with certain mediums (Kadriu 2014). Sponsorship and advertising by the Government opens the possibility to control and select the media. While there are no principles about the allocation of advertising, such media will necessarily depend on the power and will play the role of a maid. Based on this rule, the media are obliged to support the government, rather than challenge it by increasing the transparency of the work of governmental structures. But on the other hand, the media that favors the central government does not help building public opinion on issues related to vertical, voter-elected. Despite numerous requests, including calls by representatives of OSCE for the freedom of media, government has never come up with data on amounts spent, while the media daily published numerous advertisements on its activities, in particular in the pre-election period as it happens now in Macedonia. EU urged the government to come up with data on how money is spent on advertising. A report made by the European Commission experts last year shows that the government has an annual budget of 20 million Euros on advertising, which also appears as the largest advertiser in the country (Macedonian Institute for Media 2012). The structure of the media industry has not changed for a long time. The main actors are the national commercial TV stations, while many local radio and TV stations are struggling to survive. The situation is even worse in small towns with poor economies. Most violations of the legal provisions are related to advertising.

CONCLUSION

Even with the advent of democracy, till today it was not reached a space to create an impartial and independent media from the state and censorship, which will meet international standards of media and its audience. Media in Macedonia are characterized by considerable legal freedom among its operation and with a relatively large media based on population and the divided linguistic market. As a result most of the media faces problems in the benefit and some of them can hardly survive. Most of them depend on the financing of political parties and the business community. The government should ensure that the separation of governmental funds for the media should be done by a professional and

independent body, which should produce a program in advance with strict rules and clear criteria for media that will apply for funds. More space should be given to smaller media. The same program should include provisions that would protect the Albanian media from ethnic discrimination. Media should remain as a platform for public debate on which everyone should have the opportunity regardless of their diverse opinions. This will remain as an infrastructure to support the independence and pluralism of the media. The pluralism in the media content and the greater representation of the contents connected to the public interest should be encouraged also through international funds for that purpose, but also it should be encouraged through the support of the public funds, which should be oriented according to the previously known expert criteria, and the selection of the recipients of these funds to be made by competent and independent bodies, both on public and transparent way. Besides the support of the contents, one should also think in the direction for developing of the non-profit media, which hardly exist, as well as of the media of the communities and local media that are endangered.

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THE CONSTITUTIONAL REFORM AND THE POSITION OF ETHNIC MINORITIES IN THE REPUBLIC OF ARMENIA

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Abstract

This article aims to examine the ethnic minorities' state of affairs in light of the constitutional reforms in Armenia since President Serzh Sargsyan decided to open the consultations with the parliamentary factions on November 2005. Policy-makers and representatives on behalf of ethnic minority groups have been taking relevantly place at the recent wave of democratic protests throughout the process of constitutional reforms in order to entrench a more stable multiparty system, independent judiciary, new balances between State and civic society. Hence, what is the reason to endorse those tiny ethnic groups such wealth of minority rights and political recognition? Why have ethnic Armenian minority groups not had objections or particular regrets in the constitutional reform processes? In turn, may this high level of internal recognition to ethnic minority groups foster assistance to Armenian minorities and protect Armenian heritage into the de facto entities of the South Caucasus?

Key words: ethnicity; minority rights; national minority language; freedom of religion; freedom of speech; constitutional reforms

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INTRODUCTION

Despite the Republic of Armenia, formerly the Soviet Socialist Republic of Armenia, is still a mono-ethnic country, since 2005 the political system began hardly campaigning to guarantee enough juridical recognition to those non-Armenian inhabitants belonging to ethnic minorities in order to allocate them inclusion within the public realm¹.

With the Soviet system collapsing, in Armenia the political issue regarding the ethnic minority groups became culturally twofold: historical legacy of Armenia has been shaping a high level of cultural understanding towards minority groups due to wrenching past, which has in turn shaped a history-oriented path between Armenians and non-Armenians belonging living the country. Besides religious and cultural affiliations, collective traumas (Ushakin 1978, 23), triggered by “Ottoman Genocide” in 1915 and over Nagorno-Karabakh conflict, have created a national sense of tragedy (Denishiko 2015, 45) to share with members of ethnic groups which understand this feeling of pain due to their engagement in.

In the early twentieth century, Young Turks’ forces have deported and murdered Armenians alike Assyrians because of their religious affiliation with the Nestorian Church. Instead, over the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict between Armenia and Azerbaijan started officially in 1992, during the last “Four-Days War” in the April 2016, social relationships between Armenians and Yezidis became quickly tighter after the beheading of Karam by Azerbaijani troops in the “line of contacts”. In this case, the murder of the Karabakh Defense Army soldier, Karam Sloynam, who belonged to the Yezidi community from the Aragats Province, as well as the showing his head as a “fish-trophy” to the social media, have increased and of self-oriented Armenians towards issues of identity in terms of mutual respect and support.²

In a certain extent, historical experiences seem to affect the Armenian way of assessing appropriate assurances to respect ethnic minority groups’ assurance, that is, in turn, the attempt to obtain Armenian assurances that even a single person from a minority community will surely respect (Kymlicka 1995, 105). At the same time, such shared experiences understood as historical injustice bring currently Armenian community to take allowably prudent distances and limited cultural integration and engagement all over the South Caucasus, especially in the attempts to unfreeze the dispute over Nagorno-Karabakh with Azerbaijan as well as in the relationships with Georgians. In the meantime, Armenians have generally shown a high level of cultural respect for ethnic minority groups because of the suffering past shared with their members, despite it seems that Armenians have already forgotten the noble pages of their past and have created an image of victims (Harutinian

¹ This process of recognition in favour of Armenian minority groups took place since 27 November 2005 when a nationwide constitutional referendum was held and an amended constitution was adopted. In addition, the constitution was amended again in a national referendum on 6 December 2015 that changed the political structure from a semi-presidential system to a parliamentary republic.

² In addition to the death of Karam Sloynam, another soldier, Sidar Aloyan, has been killed by the Azerbaijani troops last December 2015 while he was performing the National Army in the Nagorno-Karabakh. The entire is turning the Armenians’ understanding towards cultural alignments in connection with historical patterns. In fact, according to the Caucasus Barometer’s official database shows, in 2013, the majority of interviewed Armenians approve the chance to start a business with members belonging to ethnic minority groups, such as Yezidis (57%), Molokans (57%) and Jews (51%). On the contrary, the same question shows a large disapproval with reference to Turks (67%) or Azerbaijanis (96%) and Iranians (51%).

1994, 149). In other words, a very deep image and an overwhelming cultural defense that constitutionally recognized in terms of *Armenian-ness*.³ Historically, although the Soviet hint of political change, at the Armenian heart of political underground there were constant demands for the official recognition of the Ottoman mass killing and persecution since 1890 until 1915. In 1960s, the National Unification Party were sent to Moscow with requests to change the administrative status of Nagorno-Karabakh Autonomous Oblast (NKAO), the contemporary Azerbaijani exclave of Nakhichevan as well as the Turkish Western-controlled Western Armenia, in order to reallocate these lost lands belonging to Armenian milieu (Goldemberg 1994, 46) and to unlock the country's geopolitical position. In response, Armenian campaigns remained unvoiced and, on the contrary, Soviet inertia came to shape a higher sense of nostalgia for the lost lands.

Before these political campaigns, a self-conscious perception of living along a fragile zone, namely between USSR' and NATO's space after the Turkey's admission to the Western alliance in February 1952, an increasing sense of insecurity and instability brought Armenians to feel and identify themselves as "a minority". In the meantime, out-migratory flows in direction of the wider USSR that have been affecting Armenians as members from ethnic minorities have shaped a memorial repository of tolerance and solidarity between each other.

By collapse of the Soviet Union instead, the outbreak of the ethnic hostilities throughout Trans-Caucasian state-buildings began to impinge more directly on the human security of Armenians living in the former SSR Georgia and SSR Azerbaijan. Ethno-nationalist propaganda, such as "Georgia for Georgians" attributed to both Presidents Zviad Gamsakhurdia and Eduard Shervardnadze, as well as their followers, took place by following religious affiliations and cultural alignments. For instance, even if Armenian minorities have had little to do within the security issues in Abkhazia and South Ossetia, in Georgia human rights abuses against Armenians have been reported,⁴ while in the former Nagorno-Karabakh Autonomous Oblast, forced by conflict, the rise of military hostilities have conducted Internal Displaced Person-s (IDPs) who started to reach safe places outside the region. In that case, once again Armenians came to feel the suffering of the history. Religious affiliations did not brought Georgia's government to effort on the side of Armenians belonging to former Soviet Karabakh Oblast, while, conversely, Tbilisi tried to balance its political actions for preserving only their internal provinces neighboring Armenia and Azerbaijan. Turkey, too, shifting in defense of Azerbaijan over Nagorno-Karabakh dispute, tried anew to stand against Armenians in order to protect *turksöy* roots of the region.

³ According to the new Armenian constitution (Article 19) the term Armenian-ness refers plenty the Armenian identity and millenarian heritages. Its legal usage shall carry out a policy aimed at developing comprehensive ties and preserving Armenian-ness with the Armenian Diaspora, and shall facilitate the return to homeland.

⁴ For instance, Armenians have been obliged to change the final part their family name, which outlines the cultural belongingness of Armenia ethnicity. From the typical Armenian suffix "-yan", they adopted the Georgian ones, namely "-dze" or "-shvili" as part of their surname.

OVERVIEW OF ARMENIAN ETHNIC MINORITIES

The last Armenian census (2001, De Jure Population by Age and Ethnicity) shows the mono-ethnicity of former Soviet State with a tiny non-Armenian population who belong to different ethnic groups and account less than 3% of the entire populace.

Yezidi-Kurdish minority group (42,139) is the largest ethnic community living the country within twenty-two rural settlements in which they represent the majority of population. In Armenia, their non-Muslim affiliation accounts an ancient and independent religious tradition, so-called “Yazidism”, which in turn differs from the general Muslim religious attitude of the Kurdish population. The biggest Yezidi-inhabited area is the town of Verin Artshat, while other nineteen villages are mostly located in Aragatsothn Province. There are also no-Kurd Yezidis, namely Yezidis without cultural engagement with the Kurdish heritage, who unfortunately cannot be countable due to the various sources that do not clarify the exact number. In addition, Assyrian minority (3,409) living in the rural areas of Arzni, Dmitrov, Gyol Arison, Nor Artagers, Verin Dvin, represent the second most important minority group in Armenia. Because of their religious affiliation with the Nestorian Church (Syrian Orthodox and Chaldean Catholic Church), that is, a branch of Christianity, their integration within the Armenian wider society is not a concern. On the contrary, few cultural misunderstandings happened between Armenians and Yezidi-Kurds due to their mountaineer and endogamous life world that allow community’s members to get married under the same marriage age, that according to the Armenian legal requirement is 18-years-old. In Armenia, other minority groups inhabit the country: Molochans, Ukrainians Georgians, Bielorrussians, as well as heavily Russified communities of Vlachs, Mordvins, Ossetians, Armeno-Udis and Armeno-Tats.

Besides the historical phenomenon of Armenian Diaspora, migratory flows always influence members of these ethnic minority groups and, at least apparently, migrations will continue from Armenia despite considerable improvements in the economic and political situation in Armenia.

NATIONAL MINORITY AND FREEDOM OF RELIGION

Adopted in late November 2015, the new Armenian constitution summarizes plenty in its Second Chapter the legal recognition all *fundamental rights and freedom of the human and the citizen* (Article 23), which defines human dignity of a given person as *inviolable*. According to the ethnic minority issues, the Article 56 highlights the Armenian attempts to include into the public sphere every minority group by recognizing their *right to preserve national and ethnic identity*. In addition, as written in the Second Section, *persons belonging to national minorities shall have the right to preserve and develop their tradition, religion, language and culture*.

Such juridical recognition seems to display positive results achieved due to a fruitful collaboration among legislators and political parties jointly with Armenian Government Department for the National Minorities and Religious Affairs, the Armenian Human Rights Defender, the Public Council, and the Armenian office of European Charter for Regional or Minorities Languages. Article 56 indeed connects culturally the recognized Article 14 (Second Paragraph) of the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Language, which guarantees [...] *to ensure as far as possible and within the framework of*

their education systems, adequate opportunity for being taught in “minority language” (Article 15 2008) in promotion of *culture, education, science*.

However, the minority issue concerning the protection of minority cultural heritage has been challenging the public realm with regards the sphere of education. Moreover, Assyrians and Yezidi-Kurds have point out that their languages cannot receive the juridical recognition of “minority language”, however as “*minority national language*” because of the connection with their idea of motherland (or nationhood) from which they belong to. Hence, the chance to provide public education in both Armenian and “national minority languages”, inside a form Soviet country with a Russian-speaking attitude still relevant, seems to be quite challenging. However, in collaboration with the National Agency for Ethnic Minorities and Religious Affairs, which has in turn replaced the State Board of Religious Affairs in 2003, the Minister of Education is currently promoting a large number of cultural events in order to stimulate a more social and cultural integrative processes among the majoritarian cultural system and minorities’ culture. In the case of Assyrian minority for sample, Armenian Government is promoting the editing of textbooks written in Assyrian script and leading classes taught in Assyrian language. In the rural settlements where Assyrian is the majority of inhabitants, such as Arzni, Dimitrov, Nor Artages and Verin Dvin, classes are currently taught in Assyrian language together with other courses in history, religion and culture of ethnic groups of Armenia. However, a lack of teachers with proficiency in “ethnic minority languages”, as well as of educators and social workers with a background in ethnic cultures hampers the integration in the sphere of public education and it paves the way toward the most important barrier to overcome for the Armenian government. Despite this vacuum seems to be avoided by the same ethnic minority groups who express themselves in Armenian properly, human interrelationships between Armenians have been in the same way constructiveness and, according to Kurdish and Yezidis groups,⁵ even the usage of Kurmanji language in the areas of Amra Tara-Sadunts, Alagyaz, Derek, Samshlu, Avshen, Yeraskhahun and Zovuni, is not a concern.

In terms of cultural rights with regards the sphere religion instead, the last constitutional reform has guaranteed (Article 41) the juridical protection for the *freedom of thought, conscience and religion*. Currently, in Armenia, the country’s primary religious establishment belonging to the Armenian Apostolic Church, that is, the world’s oldest national church, the constitution assurances *the freedom to change religion or beliefs and the freedom and the right to manifest religion or belief in preaching, church ceremonies, other rituals of worship or in other forms*. Even if social attitudes are still determined by Armenian Apostolic Church and its overwhelming influence according to mythological alignments cultural-based on Armenian-ness, that is, ethnicity and nationhood’s oral-epic sources. Hence, the hypothetical risk for the Armenian Church’s *soul hunting* appeared to challenge the well-living of ethnic minority groups, despite there have not been cases of abuses as well as discriminations against religious affiliation over last twenty-five years. In light of the new constitution, religion *may be restricted only by law with the aim of protecting state security, the public order, health and morals, or the fundamental rights and freedoms of others*. On the other hand, what really seems to threat minority groups is the mandatory service at the Armenian Army, which obliges every Armenian citizen to

⁵ According to the Soviet census, these minority groups in the SSR Armenia were regarded as Kurds in all official documents and provision (1939-1989). Therefore, they made solely for Kurdish in educational and cultural institutions.

perform the military service. Here, if Yezidis and Assyrians are currently serving the National Army, Jehovah Witnesses are striving in order to make use of this opportunity by using an effort to learn about something in contrast with their religious beliefs. Although this mandatory performance, Armenia trying to alternate with another enshrined service in accordance with the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which, at the Article 29, outlines that “*everyone his duties towards the community, where only the free and full development of the personality is possible*”. That is why the Forth Section of the Article 41 guarantees to the religious organizations equal rights and cultural autonomy by following the proclaimed procedure of creation and operation of religious organizations, but their status continues to be prescribed by law. In conclusion, the “Eurasian Partnership Foundation” through the last census from 2011 has reported a few number of non-Apostolic Armenian organizations (Sargsyan 2013, 35) that can easily obtain an official registration, thus a public recognition, through the cooperation (Sargsyan 2013, 34) given by the Department for the Ethnic Minorities and Religious Affairs. The latter has affirmed to have officially registered about 65 different religious organizations in the country.

Table 1: “Identity, Ignorance and Fear” (Eurasia Partnership Foundation, 2013)

Branch of religious affiliation	Number of believers
Catholic	14.000
Orthodox	8.000
Jehovah	8.600
Evangelical	30.000
Mormons	240
Molokans	3.000

PARLIAMENTARY REPRESENTATION AND POLITICAL RECOGNITION

In order to step forward towards a proportional representation at the National Assembly, the Article 89 regulates the future composition of the Armenian Parliament, which *shall consist of at least 101 parliamentarians [and] shall be assigned in the National Assembly for representatives of national minorities* starting from the upcoming 2017 elections.

By purpose, this article allocates four parliamentary seats to those candidates from each ethnic minority group. It additionally aims to get involved both Armenian political parties and ethnic minority organizations into a stimulating democratic exercise through a political recognition and representation for those unvoiced groups, despite it does not regulate or establish separate procedures for minority groups within the Electoral Code. All of these has brought the Armenian political landscape to take in consideration the elective procedure by which a candidate belonging to an ethnic minority groups can be aware to running for his/her seat at the National Assembly.

The future decision on the table is currently threefold:

- *Representation in the political party candidates' list*, which means to involve four candidates from each of the four ethnic minority groups into each political party list. In doing so, the new constitution might leave to each Armenian political party the responsibility to choose four candidates belonging from each minority groups through an internal process.
- *Single seat voting*, which guarantees four parliamentary seats at the National Assembly for a member from each ethnic minority group and it may throughout leave the necessity to set up an alternative and local elective process in order to make candidates from ethnic community aware to run for taking part at the elections without engagement with Armenian political parties. Such decision could effort Yezidi-Kurdish minority group for the possible actions of lobbying on literally behalf of a "political minority" rather than a minority group.
- *Freedom to each ethnic minority group to run for parliamentary election by their own political party or association*, which seems to be achievable by Articles 45-46 that respectively guarantees *Freedom of Association* as well as the *Right to Create a Party and Join a Party*.

Although the constitutional reform is attempting to create successfully a proportional system, the parliamentary assessment towards the political recognition for ethnic minority groups seems to mislead the representation within the Nation Assembly. Statistically indeed, ethnic minority groups in Armenia do not account the same number of members and, according to the last census in 2011⁶ Yazidis compose a larger minority than Assyrian one, as well as Yezidis are 60% of no-Armenian population, instead anew Assyrians together with other minorities account other 40%.

As many political analysts and experts have pointed out the entire does not successfully solve the ethnic minority issues in the Republic of Armenia, because it seems to raise up forward risks of manipulation conducted possibly by selfish political parties, misrepresentation due to the weaknesses in ethnic minority groups' organizations and their local self-organization, misleading for cultural rights and needs. However, thanks to the contemporary high level of recognition of the fundamental rights, such as the opportunity to acquire parliamentary seat in the National Assembly in the following the 2017 elections.

FREEDOM OF SPEECH AND EXPRESSION IN PUBLIC BROADCASTINGS

Although internet is not yet a widespread phenomenon in the Armenian rural areas in which minority groups mostly live, the cyberspace remains at the same time the most flexible and impetuous channel *of* and *for* information.

Moreover, a relevant number of reforms in the media sector have been promoted by the Armenian Government's Linguistic Policy Program, in collaboration with the Co-ordinating Council for Non-Governmental Organizations, in order to guarantees to ethnic minority groups a wide range of local newspapers, periodicals published in their spoken languages and writing, such as in *Madnhaya* script for Assyrians.

⁶ 2001 Armenian Census, *De Jure Population* (Urban, Rural) by Age and Ethnicity.

By subsidizing a part of annual national budget, Armenia's local press agencies are publicly allowed and aware to disseminate information and broadcasting services in the "national minority languages". The adopted law "On Press and Mass Media" in 8 February 2004, which replaces the previous rules dated in 8 October 1991, cooperates by law with the act of "On Public Television and Radio Broadcasting" and the Article 42 of the Armenian Constitution. All of these guarantees *the freedom of the press, radio, television and other means of information where the censorship is prohibited and the State guarantees the activities of an independent public television and radio offering a diversity of informational, educational, cultural, and entertainment programs.*

The entire began influencing Freedom House, that is, the most important American institute worldwide based in Washington DC that investigates about status of democracy regimes according to the freedom of speech and the right of expression. Thereby, Freedom House has rated Armenia as "Partly Free Country" (Freedom House 2016) with an improvement of 5 points in the last decade.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, despite ethnic minority groups have never been in the position to challenge the central supremacy, their contribution to the constitution reforms and amendments has seen as a positive fact.⁷ Most likely, their "low identity" and "shared experience of pain" with the Armenian recent history has facilitated social integration and political inclusion to the majoritarian cultural system. All of these could give the opportunity to the Armenian democracy to increase a higher level of transparency, more respect of fundamental rights and integrative public policies. Thereby, to allocate ethnic minority groups came to promote forward steps for a State still in transition toward a succeed degree of democracy and political legitimacy.

In other words, the positive track through which Armenia is performing could be a spill-over for lobbying other governments in the South Caucasus, such as Georgia, Azerbaijan, as well as Turkey. By doing so, Armenia may be politically aware to foster more protection to Armenian minority living in the *de facto* Republic of Abkhazia (Hakobyan 2015, 49)⁸, to unfreeze the frozen conflict over Nagorno-Karabakh, and to promote a cultural rehabilitation of the historical legacy and heritages of "Western Armenia" in cooperation with the Turkish government.

⁷ Only the amendment at the Article 37 regarding the children's rights has been criticized by minority organizations and local NGOs because of the lack of juridical balance between parents' rights (Article 38) and children's ones according to mountaineer heritage.

⁸ Armenian minority living in the partially recognised State of Abkhazia seems to challenge the political relationships between Tbilisi and Sukhumi. In fact, Armenians of Abkhazia are the second largest minority of the region and account a population larger than Georgian community.

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OPENNESS AND CLOSEDNESS OF THE POLITICAL SYSTEMS THAT CAUSED THE ARAB SPRING

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Abstract

Most of the analysis of the Arab spring revolved around the immediate causes of the events and the role of social media in spreading the protests, in countries that succeeded in toppling their regimes. For this reason, this study adopts a different approach to tackle the long-term development of the Political opportunity structures that set the grounds for the emergence of these movements. To avoid the bias of focusing only on movements that succeeded, the paper compares the conditions of the emergence of the Egyptian movement that toppled the Mubarak regime in eighteen days, to the Moroccan movement that faded after a year of weekly protests. Instead of discussing the immediate context in which the movements appeared, or the course of events that the movements followed, the paper adopts a historical approach to review the pre-colonial, colonial and post-colonial historical, economic and political developments that created different structures of opportunity and threat in each of the two countries.

Key words: Egypt; Morocco; colonization; civil society; political parties; openness; closedness

INTRODUCTION

The openness of a political system is generally measured by its admissibility and tolerability towards public opinion's criticism and suggestions. This means that we can say that a regime is open only as long as it has enough media and mechanisms that provide its public with direct and indirect access to the decision-making process. Nonetheless, it is difficult to measure the openness and closedness of states towards their public, mainly because of the complexity and diversity of the political apparatus in each state. For this reason, the paper relies on the methodological analysis that Herbert P. Kitschelt (1986) suggests in his article "Political Opportunity Structures and Political Protest".

Kitschelt's criteria of analysis target four main areas of the political apparatus. The first criterion – which can be used to measure the openness of a political system – is the number of political parties and fractions that have real effects on the political scene of the given country. The second criterion is related to the independence of the legislative from the executive branches in making and controlling policies. The final two criteria can be summarized in the way new demands develop into new policies and the patterns of intermediation between interest groups and the executive (Kitschelt 1986, 63). As a result, this section of the paper will depend on these criteria to compare the openness of the political system in Egypt to that of Morocco, before the Arab spring. Egypt will be discussed first

because its social movement occurred before the Moroccan one, then the same criteria will be applied to Morocco. This means that, after discussing the effects of colonization on the two countries, there will be a discussion of the development of the political parties and the civil society in Egypt then in Morocco. There will also be a discussion of the way in which the two regimes reacted to opposition throughout their recent history. Finally, this section will try to draw a picture of the general political atmosphere that existed in the two countries prior to the events of the Arab spring.

OPENNESS OF THE POLITICAL SYSTEM IN EGYPT

The Arab Republic of Egypt is a transcontinental republic that borders “the Mediterranean Sea, between Libya and the Gaza Strip, and the Red Sea north of Sudan, and includes the Asian Sinai Peninsula” (Central Intelligence Agency 2015). Its geographical location, along with its Nile Delta and the Suez Canal made Egypt one of the strongest and most influential countries in the MENA region for more than 5000 years. Egypt is also one of the most populated Arab countries, with more than 80 million citizens, who are mainly Arab Muslims except for a minority of Christian Copts. It was this great population growth that shifted the Egyptian economy, from the exportation of agricultural products to the extraction and export of oil and natural gas in addition to its reliance on tourism and the services’ industry (Goldschmidt 2008).

Pre-colonial Egypt

The geographical location of Egypt has long been the cause of its almost permanent struggle against invasion, colonization, and protectorate. After centuries of the rule of the Pharaohs, the Persians, the Macedonians, the Romans, then the Muslims and the Ottomans, Napoleon Bonaparte conquered Egypt in 1798. It remained under the French control until 1801 when Bonaparte’s campaign had to end because of the successive defeats by the British navy (Dykstra 1998). Throughout the following century of prosperity, under the *Khedivate* rule, Egypt organized its administration –with British and French supervision– and started expanding its geographical, economic and political influence in the region (Ahmed 1998). However, as many Egyptians refused the foreign manipulation, the Urabi’s Revolution (1881-1882) – under the slogan “Egypt for the Egyptians” – threatened the British interests in Egypt and was used as a pretext for the British invasion that started in 1882 (Reid 1998).

Colonial Egypt

As the Ottomans were Britain’s allies and Egypt was still an Ottoman province the occupation was not officially declared, and the British associated their existence with the persistence of the problems that brought them in the first place. Their plans for financial and governmental reforms were firmly implemented by “Lord Cromer (Sir Evelyn Baring)” who remained in Egypt as an “agent and consul-general from 1883 to 1907” (Daly 1998, 240). He succeeded in modernizing the state and in enhancing its financial and economic status-quo; yet this was at the expense of social issues, education, and liberties. In 1906, a more liberal protectorate was established after “The Dinshawai incident” in which a small fracas in the Dinshawai village escalated and unified the nationalists against the brutal invaders (Daly 1998, 243). In 1914, the Ottomans who entered the First World War on the side of central powers ceased to be Britain’s allies. The British reaction was the unilateral declaration of Egypt as a protectorate, ending the Ottoman Empire’s control of Egypt and replacing *Khedive*

Abbas Hilmi by a new Sultan – his uncle – *Husayn Kamil* (Daly 1998; Federal Research Division 1991). Britain continued using Egypt as a military base to secure its interests in the region, namely the Suez Canal, and as a source of cheap labor and income, during the four years of the war. Finally, the arrest of Saad Zaghlul and other leaders of the nationalist Wafd Party in 1919 triggered a nation-scale revolution that made the British authorities declare Egypt's independence on 28 February 1922, and return to the informal protectorate (Central Intelligence Agency 2015).

Post-colonial Egypt

Britain remained the strongest player in the Egyptian arena, followed by the king Fouad the First – the father of king Faruk – and the Wafd Party that had the greatest popular support. This support declined after the death of Zaghlul and after two terms in which the party had won elections with a majority but failed to achieve socio-economic changes and even signed the Anglo-Egyptian Treaty of 1936 (Federal Research Division 1991). As the liberal line failed, Egypt's students, workers, and nationalists “argued more convincingly for communism” (Daly 1998, 308). This led to the emergence of parties like The Muslim Brotherhood, the People's Party (*Hizb Asha'ab*), the Liberal Constitutionalist Party (*Hizb al-Ahrar al-Dusturiyyin*), the Union Party (*Hizb al-Ittihad*) and the Saadist Party (*Hizb al-Saadiyin*) (Goldschmidt 2008). The Liberal Constitutionalist and the Saadists formed the 1945 government, but along with the king Faruq they were seen as traitors after failing to defend Palestine from the Zionist invasion in 1948 (Botman 1998).

After this bitter defeat, the economic crisis that followed the Second World War and the assassination of Hassan Al Banna, for which the police were the primary suspect, the King Faruq became in a very weak position (Alexander 2011). He had to face the protests that had been recurring for almost seven years; he had to face the growing power of the Muslim brotherhood, and he had to deal with a group of junior officers that was growing within his army and planning to overthrow him (Alexander 2011).

Gamal Abdelnasser

On 23 July 1952, the Free Officers, led by Muhammad Naguib and Jamal Abdel Nasser, carried out a coup D'état, exiled the king and seized power with the popular and militant support of the Muslim Brotherhood (Alexander 2011). With a relatively communist ideology, the Revolutionary Command Council (RCC) ruled Egypt until 1954 with a firm hand. The council dissolved all the political opposition forces while it developed education, raised wages, reduced working hours and nationalized lands and properties (Federal Research Division 1991, 58-59). After Abdel Nasser had assumed power, he replaced the multi-party liberal system with the one-party system and benefited from his assassination attempt to crush the Communists, dissolve the Muslim Brotherhood and even dispose of the opposition within the RCC (Roussillon 1998). The result of this total suppression of opposition was an overwhelming domination of the executive authority over the legislative and the judiciary for the next fifty years.

The 1952 revolution was the beginning of the end of liberalism and democracy in Egypt. To secure the gains of the revolution, the National Union was created as an organization in which members of all other political factions can rally (Roussillon 1998). This was used as a pretext to consider anyone who tried to act beyond the National Union as a traitor who served foreign agendas; especially, the communists who were rallying against the policies of Abdel Nasser. However, as Abdel Nasser started to act as the leader of the

Arabs against the Western colonizers, and as he started to adopt the liberating communist ideology of his allies in the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR), he decided to substitute the National Union with the Arab Socialist Union (ASU) in 1961 (Goldschmidt 2008). Therefore, he was interested in Arab nationalism and in building an image of a strong Egypt more than his interest in the internal economic, political and social issues.

Apparently, his strategy was successful and the autocratic side of his regime was barely seen by Egyptians and by the Arabs in general. The success of his strategy was evident in 1967 when even the quick defeat after the Israeli blitz on Sinai did not stop the Egyptian and Arab masses from refusing his resignation on 9 June 1967, and demanding his reinstatement on the following day. Thus, he spent the rest of his presidency focusing on the Israeli conflict at the expense of the prosperity of the Egyptian economy, politics, and society (Barnett and Levy 1991).

Anwar Sadat

Anwar Sadat, the old member of the Free Officers and the vice-president of the last years of the Nasserite era, became the third Egyptian president after the death of Gamal Abdel Nasser in 1970. He did not inherit the presidency, yet 12 days after the death of Abdel Nasser “An election was held on October 15, and Sadat won more than 90 percent of the vote” (Federal Research Division 1991, 76). This became an Egyptian tradition, as the elected presidents of the one-party system would keep dominating more than 70 percent of votes in every presidential election. However, Sadat’s rule was different from his predecessor, he demilitarized the state, brought more civilian technocrats and privatized the state-owned enterprises that Abdel Nasser worked hard to nationalize (Abul-Magd 2013). The result was a presidential entourage of an emerging bourgeoisie, military leaders, and a civilian technocracy.

Anwar Sadat adopted the “open doors” (*Infitah*) policy in an attempt to boost the weak Egyptian economy. He opened the doors of Egypt to the western capitalist investors and neglected the previously established ties with the eastern communist Soviet Union (Shukor 2005). His newly established ties with the United States put him in contrast with the leftists inside Egypt and made him release the detained Muslim Brotherhood members who had to neutralize those leftist activists (Ghanem 2014). This worked well for a while, especially in 1973, when Anwar Sadat became the new hero after he crossed the Bar-Lev line. In fact, the military victory did not last long, and the real cause of Nasser’s hailed heroism was the interference of other Arab countries – and “the ability of the petroleum-exporting states, led by Saudi Arabia, to quadruple prices and reduce production” – which forced Israel and its allies’ retreat (Goldschmidt 2008, 194).

Between 1975 and 1977, he started allowing the emergence of other political parties in the Egyptian political scene. Nonetheless, he suppressed all the voices that represented real and strong opposition by issuing “the Political Parties Law (law 40 of 1977) [that] excluded parties based on class, religion, or regional affiliation” (Wickham 2002, 65). By doing this, he deprived the leftists, Nasserists, and the Islamists from the right to legal existence, and deprived the legal parties from the right to criticize his policies. Sadat’s rule was more liberal than that of Abdel Nasser; but in general, it was a closed regime that allowed only enough political freedom to advertise its “political liberalization”. In reality:

Restrictive electoral laws, poll rigging, continued limits on the press, and the considerable power of the president, including his ability to appoint a full third of the upper house of Egypt’s legislature, ensured that political activity remained circumscribed (Cook 2007, 26).

In the final years of his rule, Sadat substituted the ruling Arab Socialist Party with the National Democratic Party. To provide it with some legitimacy, he created moderate opposition that included the rightist Socialist Liberal Party (*Ahrar*) and the leftist National Progressive Unionist party (*Tagammu'*) which were “two “loyal” opposition parties (center right and center left) headed by politicians close to the regime and lacking ties to a mass base” (Wickham 2002, 65). The real leftists and rightists in Egypt formed secret parties and organizations and were chased, detained and tortured by the regime that could not stand their growing criticism (Shukor 2005).

Disapproval grew as the image of the hero started shaking in 1978 when Sadat signed the Camp David accords, and in 1979 when he signed the Peace Treaty with Israel (Ghanem 2014). By demonstrating compliance and consent to the Israelis and their American allies, Anwar Sadat waved away what was probably his only advantage in the Egyptian public opinion. The result was his assassination in 1981 by a group of Egyptian officers who belonged to a religious extremist group, called ‘Al Jihad’ (Holly War), during the October 6th, Victory Parade (Federal Research Division 1991). This assassination was the pretext for the announcement of a three-decade state of emergency by the vice-president Hosni Mubarak, who assumed power as an interim president after the death of Sadat (Hassan H. A. 2011).

Hosni Mubarak

Mubarak was different from his predecessors in the fact that he had no specific ideology and no plans to maintain the regional leadership of Egypt. He did not have the Arab nationalist tendencies of Abdel Nasser and he did not try to unify the Arabs against Israel, like Sadat. His main goal was to survive as an Egyptian president, and he succeeded in doing so for thirty years. In this vein, Curtis R. Ryan (2001) believes that “Mubarak's slow and methodical diplomacy has had none of the dramatic successes of Nasser or Sadat; but neither has it resulted in any grand failures” (12). Therefore, instead of following the steps of the previous presidents who had covered their internal failure by relying on external glories, Mubarak had to work on the local problems of Egypt.

In the first years of his rule, Mubarak started disseminating a discourse of political openness towards the different actors of the Egyptian society. In the first decade of his rule, he allowed the increase of the number of political parties from three to thirteen (Wickham 2002). The Muslim Brotherhood was more tolerated and though it did not have the total freedom to act as a political party, it had the right to act inside the Egyptian society and to provide some services to the Egyptian people as part of its non-violent activism (Kausch 2012). Mubarak had also inaugurated a reconciliation process with the major opposition figures by meeting some of those who had been imprisoned by Sadat, at the presidential palace, in a move that aimed at demonstrating his indulgence and good will (Ryan 2001). In addition to that, Mubarak allowed a relatively free press that could criticize his regime and succeeded in coining the image of a free judiciary that could legitimize political parties that the government had banned (Wickham 2002; Kienle 2001).

At the economic and social levels, Mubarak had managed to install series of actions that aimed at polishing his image as a president that could guarantee a better future for the Egyptian masses. In fact, he depended on the United States’ aid to launch a variety of economic and social projects. This aid was given to him to maintain the diplomatic relationships with Israel, and it was supposed to target the reinforcement of the military and the economy of Egypt. Therefore, he used it in “expanding the water and sewer system of greater Cairo, upgrading the telephone network, building new schools, introducing better varieties of wheat and rice, and extending family planning services” (Goldschmidt 2008, 214-

215). The United States' aid was not enough and Egypt had to borrow money from international organizations like the International Monetary Fund and the International Bank. This strategy led the 1990s Egypt to follow the "structural adjustment policy" that would lead to more privatization, less social projects and to the deepening of socio-economic problems (Gumuscu 2010, 850). To secure the newly adopted unpopular policies, Mubarak knew that he had to bring back the army to the political scene, and "While Sadat made conscious efforts to subordinate the army and demilitarize the state, Mubarak restored its privileged position in Egyptian society and welcomed it as a full partner to his regime" (Ryan 2001, 07). The result was that the image of Mubarak as the democratic and open-minded leader started to wane and was going to be replaced by the image of the brutal leader who could do anything to remain in his chair.

The openness of his political system towards new parties appeared to be trivial as neither the elections nor the free judiciary could change the fact that the National Democratic Party kept controlling the parliament (Kienle 2001). The opposition parties that had the right to act in Egypt had been isolated from the public and had very limited numbers of regular adherents that ranged "from several hundred to a few dozen" (Wickham 2002, 70). In addition to that, when some parties and their leaders tried to act as real opposition they were subjected to intimidation or imprisonment –as in the case of the *Ghad* (Tomorrow) Party leader Ayman Nur who was imprisoned during the 2005 elections, after he had "expressed concern about the state of human rights in Egypt" (Goldschmidt 2008, 217). Therefore, the claimed free judiciary could not act independently from the executive authority, and remained "vulnerable to pressure from the justice and interior ministries" (Goldschmidt 2008, 217).

The civil society in Egypt played a similar role to that of the political parties. In addition to the existence of more than 89 Syndicates, Trade Unions, and Interest Groups, the Egyptian regime had allowed the emergence of more than 14 600 civil associations that tried to enhance the economic, social, cultural and developmental facets of the Egyptian society (Hassan H. A. 2011). However, under the control of the Ministry of Social Affairs, that had the right to allow new associations and to ban the existing ones, the Egyptian civil society had a very limited span of action (Wickham 2002). In other words, the existence of the Egyptian civil associations was tolerated only as long as they contributed to the creation of "a climate in which civil and political freedoms may be legitimately sacrificed in the name of national unity and security" (Pratt 2005, 74). As Mubarak started gaining more confidence, his relatively democratic and open regime kept toughening its manners. According to Nahed Eltantawi and Julie B. Wiest (2011):

Presidential and parliamentary elections lacked transparency; corruption permeated all government bodies; and political conditions for Egyptian citizens were oppressive, preventing free expression, protest opportunities, and general political participation (1210).

In their 2011 election program, the Freedom and Justice Party claimed that "The number of detainees in President Mubarak's reign exceeded 100 thousand detainees; that ranged from 3 months to ten years imprisonment with an average of 50 thousand years of the lives of Egypt's youth behind bars" (The Freedom and Justice Party 2011, 04). As a result, the regime that started by working on the economic and social issues to secure its existence was reoriented towards suppression and autocracy, as the structural adjustments imposed less social projects and less room for fair democratic treatment. The economic difficulties that Mubarak faced could be seen as a weak excuse to the tough procedures that he had to follow to maintain Egypt's stability. Nonetheless, Mubarak had other excuses as he argued that his

adopted severe measures were to protect the majority of the illiterate Egyptians who might have been easily manipulated by ‘evil’ political parties that could flourish in a real multi-party system. In this vein, Mubarak said:

In our democracy, we exploit the citizens’ simplicity. We have a high rate of uneducated people. Because of this simplicity and the high rate of uneducated people, we can infuse very dangerous ideas into the people’s minds. Democracy can be soundly established when you have educated people, people who can read and write. (Wickham 2002, 67).

The results of his actions, either because of his fear for the interest of his people or for his personal greed, were the creation of a closed political system. The diversity of the political parties had no effects on the political life or the political decision-making process in Egypt. The free judiciary was only free as long as it did not threaten the president and his allies’ interests. The legislative role that the parliament was supposed to play was stagnant, because of the total domination of the president’s National Democratic Party. Even the civil society could not act as an independent body and had to abide by the state’s regulations as a condition for survival. Consequently, the only solution that was left for the Egyptians was to resort to para-constitutional organizations and movements that could act beyond the regime’s consent and under its threat.

OPENNESS OF THE POLITICAL SYSTEM IN MOROCCO

The North African Moroccan Kingdom is the closest African country to Europe and is located in the far West of the Maghreb region. Morocco’s estimated 34 million inhabitants are mainly Muslims while less than 1 percent is made of Christians and Jews (Federal Research Division 2006). The Moroccans’ official languages are Arabic and Tamazight (Berber) –that became an official language only in the 2011 constitution– while French is the language of administration and official documents (Chaker 2013). On the economic level, Morocco is mainly an agricultural country that benefits from its location and its long coastal borders to export agricultural products. In addition to agriculture, the Moroccan economy relies on its reserve of Phosphate and its ability to attract foreign investments and to provide stable and diverse revenues (African Development Bank 2015).

Pre-colonial Morocco

The documented history of Morocco dates back to the beginnings of the Phoenician and Carthaginian invasions of the Atlantic coast of Morocco around 1000 Years BC. The Berber inhabitants of Morocco were subject to successive invasions after the vandals, as the Romans who had allied with Massinissa and had established Juba The Second as the king of “Mauretania Tingitana”, in the second and third centuries BC, annexed the kingdom in the year forty BC (Park and Boum 2005, lxiii). After the Romans, Tangier remained under the control of the Vandals then the Visigoths until the beginnings of the seventh century when the first Muslim invader Mûsa Bno Nusayr captured Tangier and left “Tarîq Bn Ziyâd as governor” (Park and Boum, 2005, lxiii). Many Islamic Dynasties were established and removed by other Islamic Dynasties, until the coming of “the Alawis, who founded a dynasty that has remained in power since the seventeenth century” (Federal Research Division 2006, 02). In the eighteenth century, the Alawite Sultan Moulay Ismail and his slave army reestablished the superiority of the Moroccan army, which had been proven in the Battle of the Three Kings (Wadi-Lmakhazin) in 1578 (Park and Boum 2005).

However, the invasion of the neighboring Algeria had proven that the past glory and the British protection were all that protected Morocco from the fate of its neighbors. When Moulay Abd-el-Kader requested the Moroccan protection, the Alaouite army was easily defeated and surprised by the progress of the French army in the Battle of Isly in 1844 (Howe 2005, 62-63; Park and Boum 2005).

As weak Sultans could not maintain the centralized control of the Moroccan tribes and could not rely on them to strengthen their armies, the Moroccan army became so weak that it endured another major defeat by the Spanish troops in 1906. This defeat made the once strong country in a very weak position, made it accept harsh trade terms and made it sign a peace treaty that obliged it “to pay an indemnity of 100 million pesetas” that could only be gathered through higher taxes and higher prices (Burke 1976, 20). The result was a sort of tribal disobedience and even rebellions that were exacerbated by the accumulation of foreign debts by irresponsible Sultans like Moulay Abdul-Aziz and Abdul-Hafiz (Burke 1976; Park and Boum 2005; Howe 2005).

The weak kingdom became the cause of two crises between the regional colonizers and Germany in 1905 and 1911. As Britain quit defending Morocco “in exchange for free hand in Egypt”, France found ways to agree with Spain and Italy and even Abdul-Aziz the Fourth agreed to the French protectorate if they could keep him as a sultan of Morocco (Howe 2005, 64). However, the German Kaiser Wilhelm visited Morocco in 1905 to express Germany’s anger at its exclusion from the regional colonization agreements and to prevent interventions in Morocco (History.com Staff 2006). After six years, the French authorities claimed that the local tribes were revolting and threatening its interests in Fez and that the sultan Abdel Hafiz requested their interference, and Germany was “forced to back down” as it found itself isolated (History.com Staff 2009). The final step was the establishment of the protectorate in Morocco through an agreement between Abdel Hafiz and the French who gave the North and the South to the Spaniards.

Colonial Morocco

The colonization of Morocco was the end of the era when the public sphere or the civil society could change sultans who did not respond to the criteria that the men of knowledge (*Ulema*) established. In the pre-colonization era, the tribe leaders and *Ulema* could dispose of under-qualified sultans. Their ‘social contract’ (*bay’a*) said that “If the Sultan rules justly (...) then they have a duty to obey him” while “If he does not, and fails (...) it was not only the right of the people –led by the ‘ulema – to remove him, but their duty to do so” (Sater 2007, 28). Yet, since 1912, after Abdul-Hafiz had been replaced by Moulay Youssef, the French allied with the appointed sultan and protected his reign against the will of the tribes and *Ulema* of the time (Howe 2005).

The armed resistance started and spread in the North, South and The Atlas Mountains of Morocco (Marine Corps Intelligence Activity 2012). In the Northern regions of Rif, Guerilla tactics were used in the resistance of Abdelkarim El-Khattabi to the Spanish colonizer, and they culminated in Abdelkarim’s announcement of the Rif Republic in 1921 (Pennell 1986). Abdelkarim was defeated after a French-Spanish coalition while the Southern resistance of Ma’a El Ainin was suppressed through a coalition between the defeated French and some Berber tribal chiefs; namely, Glaouis who was known as “the lord of the Atlas” (Howe 2005, 65). Finally, Fez’s rebellion against the sultan and against the colonial forces was massively suppressed by the French forces (Marine Corps Intelligence Activity 2012). After the defeat of the armed resistance, and after the coronation of Mohammed V as the new sultan in 1927, nationalists started forming new fronts through which they could fight the

colonial existence (Miller 2013). Their fight aimed at achieving reforms instead of demanding independence, and they began by the demands of the removal of the Berber edict (*Dahir*) that exempted Berbers from sharia Law (Park and Boum 2005). In 1934, the nationalist supported the young sultan Mohamed Ben Youssef to become a king and, under the leadership of Allal AL Fasi, they formed the “Moroccan Action Committee” (Federal Research Division 2006, 03). In the same year “allâl al-fâsî and others presented a Plan of Reforms to the protectorate (maTâlib al-sha‘b al-maghribî), which were in part answered by the abolition of the Berber Dahir” (Park and Boum 2005, 121).

The committee that had become the first Moroccan political party was behind massive protests and confrontations with the police in Meknes and that made the French target Allal AL Fasi and exile him to Gabon in 1937 (Stenner 2014). Towards the end of the Second World War, the public demands developed from simple reforms towards independence. Those demands were voiced by the newly created “Independence Party (*Hizb al-Istiqlal*), the Party for Democracy and Independence (*Hizb al-Shura wa-l-Istiqlal*), the Moroccan Unity Party (*Hizb al-Wahda al-Maghribiyya*)” in the French areas, and the National Reform Party (*Hizb al-Islah al-Watani*) in the Spanish zones (Stenner 2014, 527-528).

In their fight for independence, the leftists, and the rightists were rallying behind the king as the symbol of sovereignty and liberation and they depicted him as a hero that had been exiled for standing against the protectorate. This 1953 exile of the king made the Moroccans formalize their secret Resistance Army that targeted the French troops in the South and North of Morocco. The French who had promised Moroccans independence for fighting with them in the Second World War were faced with strong resistance in Algeria and Morocco and were obliged to bring the king back from his exile in Madagascar. However, the glorious return of the hero did not end the armed resistance despite the fact that independence was a part of the king’s agreement with the French.

Post-colonial Morocco

As the Spanish existence in Morocco remained intact and the French troops kept using Morocco as a military base to target the Algerian resistance, it became impossible for the king to convince the resistance leaders to quit resisting and to join his newly formed Royal Armed Forces. Thus, the king and the Istiqlal party tried to control the resistance army or even to terminate it, while the latter had lost faith in its government and king. Eventually, the Moroccan resistance army was silenced, but only after its leaders and fighters were “allegedly” assassinated by the Moroccan regime (Amezian 2008; Hodges 2008; Marine Corps Intelligence Activity 2012, 6).

Mohammed V

The king also became the opponent of the Istiqlal Party that was trying to dominate the Moroccan political scene. In a controversial move, the king had to encourage a multi-party system in order to weaken the position of the Independence Party that was widely respected for its long struggle against the French colonizer. However, in the postcolonial era, the king became stronger, while the Independence Party was divided between the forces of the radical left-wing that El Mahdi Ben Barka led and the right wing that was led by the conservative Allal Al Fasi (Storm 2007, 13-14). Another important fraction within the Istiqlal party came to the fore when prominent leaders like “Abdelkrim el-Khatib and Mahjoubi Aherdane, set up a new party, the Mouvement Populaire” (Storm 2007, 16). In brief, the

king's creation of his own army and police forces and his plan to appoint less radical leftist leaders as ministers in his governments made the Istiqlal Party and all the other parties in a very weak position.

Hassan II

After 1961 when Hassan the Second became king, after the death of his father Mohammed the Fifth, autocracy took its full form. Hassan II could not support any kind of criticism or disobedience and ruled the country with an iron fist until the beginning of the 1990s. In this vein, Pierre Hazan (2006) argues that:

The “Years of the Iron Fist” (known in Morocco as “les années de plomb,” or years of lead) began in 1961 and lasted until the end of the Cold War in 1989. A climate of intimidation characterized this period. The security services were responsible for the “disappearance” of hundreds of political opponents and the torture of thousands (02).

Therefore, though the king allowed the existence of a multiparty system, this diversity was allowed only as long as it weakened all the parties while the real opposition was really oppressed. The Moroccan political system that was promoted by Hassan II allowed the existence of more than thirty political parties. Those parties were so diverse in their political orientations and trends, as they varied between “rightist, leftist, socialist, communist, and Berber-allied political parties” (Buehler 2013, 139). In addition to the “heavy-handed” handling of opposition parties, “The king used different strategies to limit the role of opposition parties including the creation of “administration parties” loyal to the Monarchy (UC, RNI, MP), the modification of electoral rules, and electoral fraud” (Ames, Picard, and Carreras 2010, 03). The rationale behind Hassan II's choice was similar to that of his father, as by allowing and even creating a big number of weak political parties the chances of a real, strong and unified opposition were minimized.

The ally of the United States during the cold war did not have to worry about Western criticism of his authoritative reign until the end of the Cold War when those western allies started demonstrating their concerns about the King's methods (Kausch 2009, 165; Ames, Picard, and Carreras 2010). The Western concerns were not enough to deter a king who had been suppressing his people for thirty years, and who had been obsessed with security after two attempts of military coups (Storm 2007). However, after the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund started imposing structural reforms, the threat of “the “bread riots” that rocked the major Moroccan cities” in the 1980s, in addition to the Western democratization demands, and the changing geopolitical arena in the Post-cold War era, made the King Hassan II consider some steps towards liberalism (Traboulsi 2009, 61). Therefore, he had to allow:

The drafting of a new Constitution, the acceptance of the principle of the alternation of power which finally brought the main opposition party—the Socialist Union of Popular Forces—to form a government, the release of political prisoners (Traboulsi 2009, 60).

The 1990s liberalization process was also behind the appearance of a hugely dispersed civil society that could not affect the Moroccan political scene. As the people could barely trust the tamed Moroccan political parties, the citizens opted for civil society as an alternative through which they could make changes and improvements to their local or national environment (Sater 2007). Nonetheless, the Moroccan regime could decide which associations it would support and which it would not even allow forming, based on their

goals and on the role they played in polishing the regime's image nationally and internationally (Dimitrovova 2009).

Mohammed VI

After the death of Hassan II in 1999, his son Mohammed the Sixth inherited the throne and the heavy legacy of an authoritarian regime. He inherited the 1996 constitution and the resulting alternance government that was headed by the strongest leftist opposition leader Abdurrahman Al Yousfi, since 1998, and that was given large margins for action (Traboulsi 2009). The king also inherited the old feud with The Justice and Charity Group (Jama'at Al Adl Wal Ihsan) that was the strongest and most radical Islamist opposition in Morocco (FRIDE 2007). Therefore, the new king had to go further with the liberation process that his ancestor started and had to find ways to announce that the old era had ended.

In this vein, his words and actions in the first years had shown that the new king's reign was the end of the era of totalitarianism, but they did not go far enough to bring the parliamentary monarchy that the Moroccan activists awaited. The new king's creation of "Equity and Reconciliation Commission" raised the public aspirations about the new age in which a king had the courage to confess his father's mistakes, free the political prisoners and even compensate them for their suffering (Ames, Picard, and Carreras 2010). Moreover, and despite the fact that the state officials who caused the old regime's human right violations were not prosecuted, some gestures like "the dismissal of the long-serving and much-hated, minister of the interior, Driss Basri" were appreciated (Owen 2004, 98). The king had also shown a great willingness to promote democracy and to modernize the country by announcing "a new concept of authority" based on the defense of public services, freedoms, security, and stability" (Howe 2005, 08). Finally, and as a response to the civil society's demands, the new king changed the family code that recommended equal status to women in the Moroccan society and the labor code that regulated and enhanced the workers' rights (Zerari 2006; Bureau Of International Labor Affairs 2004).

After many years of the new King's accession to power, these steps appeared to be trivial when compared to the fact that the general political apparatus in Morocco remained under the control of the palace or what Moroccans call (AL Mekhzen) (Dennison, Popescu, and Torreblanca 2011; Jandary 2012). This political superiority of the king and his entourage is illustrated by Shana Cohen and Larabi Jaidi (2006) who see that in Morocco:

The constitution does not limit the power of the King, who possesses divine sanction as the Amir al-Mouminine, or commander of the faithful. In Article 19, 4 all division of power in Morocco, even that of the ulemas (the authoritative council within the Islamic clergy), falls below the status of the monarch. The sole social contract represented in the political system in Morocco is that between elected representatives and the population; the King remains above political pacts (60).

Many tangible actions and events happened at the beginning of the reign of the new king and their interpretation made Moroccans less optimistic. On 17 May 2001, after The Moroccan association of the Human Rights AMDH had participated in a demonstration in Rabat:

36 militants were each condemned to three months' imprisonment and a 3000-Dirham fine (US\$300). They were found guilty of 'participating at the organization of a banned manifestation and the public, non-armed gathering that could have threatened the public order' (Sater 2007, 147).

Another event that had ended the high hopes of the liberal democratic Morocco was the Casablanca attacks of 2003. Those attacks were used as a pretext to go back to some measures of the years of lead, namely as “mass arrests and numerous convictions on nebulous charges of plotting against the state” became accepted and even called for in the name of security (Howe 2005, 334). Moroccans started feeling the seriousness of the new situation when “General Laanigri was transferred from the DST—Morocco’s FBI—to become director general of the Department of National Security” (Howe 2005, 335). This meant that another iron fist had started to take control of the daily life of Moroccans and that security could be used as a pretext for suppression.

Politically speaking, during the reign of Mohammed IV, the governments were led by the Socialist Union of Popular Forces, technocrats, then by the Istiqlal party. They were all controlled by the palace and this fact became clear as the Prime Minister Abbas el Fassi had totally abandoned his Istiqlal Party’s plan in 2007 by announcing that “his only political program was the “program of the king,” which the monarch had announced two months before the elections” (Monjib 2011, 06). This fact was an additional proof that the existing parties were not included in the decision-making process, despite the fact that the whole elections’ intention was to include the public in the legislative process through its elected representatives. In addition to that, the Party for Justice and Development (PJD) remained in the opposition despite its victories in many elections, and that was another disappointment to the public (FRIDE 2007). Finally, the Justice and Spirituality Group (*Jama’at Al Adl Wal Ihsan*) remained outside the political field and kept declaring that it cannot take part in fraudulent elections that controlled parties and that restricted the use of Islam in politics on the grounds that the king was the only representative of Islam in Morocco (Moqtadir 2005, 59-61).

CONCLUSION

The Moroccan Political structures before the Arab Spring were neither very open nor totally closed. Morocco had evolved throughout its history to become a state that could tolerate some sorts of plurality but not to the extent that substantial changes to the regime could occur. It had been engaged in a very steady –and slow– process of liberalization and modernization since the 1990s and though there were many cases of suppression, there had always been some space left for the public to demonstrate its dissatisfaction. This meant that the Moroccan regime had acquired a certain amount of flexibility that allowed it to know when to confront the public with force and when to follow the mainstream desires to avoid clashes. Therefore, Morocco succeeded in becoming a country that altered its policies and politics from being close to being open and vice versa, and it did that according to its evaluation of the particular balance of strength and weakness and according to its sense of safety and threat.

The regime’s flexibility was also very effective as it allowed it to bend when the wave of protests was strong and to regain control gradually as the protests started fainting. In the first months of protests, the Moroccan regime communicated with the protesters instead of confronting them and granted them constitutional reforms that they could not even demand, while it only started suppressing them when the movement started getting weaker. The result of this methodic alternation between the carrot and the stick tactics was that the moderate majority was satisfied with the reforms and withdrew from the protests, while the radical minority was silenced by the state’s coercive methods (Strachan 2014; Hespess 2011).

In Egypt, as we have seen, Mubarak and the Egyptian army have succeeded in making the nationalist party the only party that could win elections and that could elect the president. Unlike Morocco, where the king's position remained undisputed and the political conflict was successfully oriented towards the horizontal clashes between parties that kept taking turns in pretending to be ruling the country, the Egyptians failed to draw lines between the presidency and the government. The Egyptian regime had also developed a strict counter-opposition attitude that made it unable to tolerate any form of contention or dissent. Consequently, when the Egyptian youth protested on 25 January 2011, the regime reacted with violence, which was its only tool, and the people retaliated with more violence and demanded the fall of the government and the regime that were seen as one entity for the last three decades (Sheridan and Siemaszko 2011; CBS.News 2011).

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THE ROLE OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA IN THE POST-COLD WAR WORLD: A GLOBAL LEADER OR HEGEMON?

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Abstract

The authors of this paper deal with the role of the USA in the post-Cold War world and their position from the standpoint of relevant indicators and theoretical considerations. This work also refers to path that the United States took from isolationism to the world domination and considers justification of the position of the USA in the period after the Cold War from the point of hegemonic stability theories, while at the end indicates the diversity of understanding of contemporary thinkers regarding the position of the United States as the hegemon or rather “just” a global leader. This paper does not prejudge the final definition of the position of the USA in international relations, but aims to launch discussions on the necessity and justification of the existence of such vision on a global scale.

Key words: international relations; Cold War; United States; NATO; Europe

INTRODUCTION

With the end of the Cold War in 1989, the United States of America remained the only global power. The disintegration of the Warsaw Treaty and the Soviet Union's gradual loss of territory, led the considerations about future role of NATO, but also about needs of its future existence. Moreover, Kant's “perpetual peace” seemed achievable, because a great force was no longer necessary to follow other in security contest and the return to the institutions of the international community and cooperation within it seemed like a good

opportunity for achieving the prosperity of all countries and the establishment of permanent peace. The Cold War, the term that was generally accepted and used for over fifty years, marked a period of competition between two great powers and two blocks in the period after the Second World War. Although there was no major armed conflict as a consequence of the “balance of power” or more properly “balance of fear”, like any war this one had at least two sides, and therefore the winners and losers. The very fact that defeated side accepted and recognized the result of the war gave a winner the right to exploit the success, while the defeated sought to consolidate, avoiding confrontation in any field until eventual recovery. The US, along with their allies, quickly dispelled eventual hope that lasting peace can come after the Cold War by exploitation of victory in two key areas: (1) although there were promises that in the post-Cold War period NATO will not be engaged beyond the borders of the Member States, very quickly this limit was excluded. In 1991 at the NATO summit in Rome, the “new strategic concept” which promotes a doctrine that allows the Union to engage beyond the borders of its member states was adopted; also, (2) open access for the admission of new Member States, which resulted in the expansion of NATO in the East already in 1999 with the official reception of the Czech Republic, Hungary and the Poland in the Alliance. Fulfillment of part of conditions for membership in NATO in specific cases was either formal, precisely because the exploitation of success after victory in the Cold War.

Although the above-described developments of the situation fit to NATO and to its members that have recognized their own interests will be fulfilled by the membership in the Alliance, the fact that the US had a major role is not in question. Minimum of common interests is reflected in the need of European partners to have on their side dominant force capable to enable military presence in the region, which they alone could not have been able to provide, but also as a guarantor of deterrence from the Russian Federation, which expresses the desire for returning influence in the rest of Europe that is still not part of NATO and which present their sphere of influence. The possibility of returning under the influence of the Russian Federation in the countries of the former Warsaw Pact is still treated as a danger, and in this sense the existence of dominant power (the United States) is welcomed. For the US the existence of NATO is necessary for providing legitimacy of their military presence in Europe, and also to gain approval for their expansionists and interventionist military moves. Although the United States remained the only global power after the end of the Cold War, the prospects for lasting eternal peace do not exist. The rise of China, the Russian Federation, Japan, mutual rivalry and conflict of interest in the Asia-Pacific region, are reason enough for the local presence of US military forces. In Europe, there is still a fear of France and the United Kingdom from the domination of Germany and its possible aggressive behavior in absences of dominant force. The fear of large build-up of forces inevitably imposes the need of their mutual competition, where every force is trying to extend their power and become the strongest among them. Achieving this goal is desirable, but it presents only a transitional stage towards the final goal, which is to remain the only great power, or a hegemon. This paper deals with the role of the US in the post-Cold War world and their position from the standpoint of relevant indicators and theoretical considerations. In the first continent, the work refers to the way which led US from isolationism to world domination. In the second part examines the justification of the position of the US in the aftermath of the Cold War from the perspective of the theory of hegemonic stability, while the third part points the diversity of understanding of

contemporary thinkers regarding the position of the US as the hegemon or “just” as the global leader. This paper does not prejudge the final definition of the position of the US in international relations, but aims to launch discussions on the necessity and justification of the existence of vision of such dominance on the global scale.

THE UNITED STATES: FROM ISOLATION TO WORLD DOMINATION

The US are dominant force in four decisive domains of global power: the military - unattainable possibility of reaching different areas of the world; economical - the main driver of global growth, although in some aspects Japan and Germany compete (none of them have other attributes of global forces); technological - leadership in key areas of innovations; and cultural - (...) have attractiveness without competition, (...), which together give the US political force like no other country. The combination of these four attributes makes the US a global force. (Brzezinski 1999). Historically, the US access to the global scene coincides with the period of presidency of Theodore Roosevelt, 26th President of the United States. A significant part of T. Roosevelt attitudes were based on the teachings of Alfred Thayer Mahan (1840 - 1914), US Navy officer and scholar. He prompted the necessity of American dominance in the world based on the development of maritime power. Mahan vividly described his attitude: “I am imperialist, simply because I am not isolationist.” (Russel 2006).

Theodore Roosevelt was the first president who “emphasized the duty of America to extend the influence in the whole world, which will be set up in accordance with its national interests.” (Kissinger 2008). The culmination of Roosevelt's views followed the First World War and the United States moved towards achieving the leading position on the international scene. However, after the First World War, although there were no essential differences between the understanding of isolationists and internationalists, isolationists attitudes overcome and the United States have not ratified the Treaty of League of Nations. It is important to note that under the internationalists in the US believed that they were in favor of membership in the League of Nations, and not the advocate of regular and active participation in international politics. After this event, it was expected that the US will turn to their own development, without deeper involvement in international relations. The (self) isolation was not complete given that the US had an active role in matters of a financial nature, of which perhaps the most important was the issue of payment of war reparations. No less significant has been the participation of the US in defining the general principles of the peaceful settlement of disputes in the international arena, as well as active participation in the regulation of relations among the great powers. As one of the examples, and possible turning point that confirmed future dominance of the US, was “The Washington conference” during which the major powers the US, Great Britain and Japan defined rules and constraints in the development of navies. The Washington conference was held in the US capital from 11th December 1921 till 6th February 1922. where parties reached “an agreement about keeping and building battleships and aircraft carriers,” which recognized the primacy of the United States. By defining the “rules”, the US confirmed a new “role of the dominant forces in the Pacific, which they share with Japan. Since then, the role of the Great Britain in this area was given “secondary importance” (Kissinger 1999).

Accordingly, Mahan's understanding of the US foreign policy orientation towards the Pacific, with its dominant role, can be discerned between the two world wars.

Leaving the concept of isolationism is linked to the presidential mandate of Franklin Delano Roosevelt in the period before the beginning and during the Second World War. Despite resistance of isolationists, F. Roosevelt announced the participation of the US in world affairs. During the performance on the duty of the President of the United States, he relied on his experience as the Under-Secretary in US Navy using this experience to vigilantly publish his foreign policy positions. Caution was reflected in the ambiguity of form of attitudes, but precise enough to fulfill his commitment of America's active approach and the presence in international politics (Rofe 2008). Defining national interests that were represented by F. Roosevelt were supported in the teachings of Mahan.

The mere fact that during the Under-Secretary-duty in the US Navy he achieved a strong communication with Mahan, affected his views in terms of foreign policy that was later created and represented. Franklin Roosevelt launched the debate that opposed the division of the American fleet in the Pacific and the Atlantic, and in this process he sought help from T. Roosevelt and A. Mahan. He thought their critical thinking will be useful in achieving this objective (Rofe 2008). A certain turning point in gaining support for his views Roosevelt represented in Chicago on the 5th October 1937, the "Quarantine Speech", where for the first he warned of the danger US could face and when he for the first time proposed measures to reduce or eliminate these hazards. In addition to Mahan's role in preventing the division of the fleet, the contribution of the understanding of the policies mentioned the President of the US describes Simon J. Rofe: "Mahan strategy has made the connection between the navy and empire, and Theodore and Franklin Roosevelt understood this." (Rofe 2008). In addition to the undoubted influence of Mahan's learning, Nikolas Spykman was one of the scientists whose concept substantial effect on the future role of the US in the international arena. Dilemma "to influence on the world or to stay on the sideline", "Spykman expresses with the question: "should we protect our interests by defense on our side of the ocean, or to actively participate in countries across the ocean?" He stresses the need that "USA must understand once and for all that the constellation of power in Europe and in Asia have significance for them both in time of the war and in time of the peace" (Vukovic 2007).

Spykman highlights the importance of the geographic factor in international politics, and his thesis on "the conflict nature- essence of international politics". The strategic priority for United States is to prevent the unification of Eurasia into the enemy force, which can be achieved by exercising the role of the US as a "world balancer" with the primary aim of securing the global primacy of the United States. "Balancing" means the military and diplomatic activity on the edges of Eurasia, creating regional balances of power, security arrangements and military-political focus on Rimleda zone. All mentioned objectives imply widespread overseas presence, then stronger cohesion of the two Americas and the ability to conduct wars with integrated performance of all forms of power. (Vukovic 2007).

The announcement of the new world order with the active role of the United States already appeared during the Second World War. According to Paul Kennedy, "havoc created in Hiroshima and the fall of Berlin in the hands of the Red Army not only symbolized the end of another war, but also marked the beginning of a new world order." (Kenedi 2003). The world was moving towards the bipolar era, although the enormous

economic power of the US after the Second World War comparing to the former world powers, indicated that conditions for the global dominance of the US were created. Such developments of situation no longer allow US to return to isolationism, especially as old forces and power were descent and new ones begin to rise. What was left for scholars to via relevant theories define the future position of the US in the world - a global leader or hegemon?

THE THEORY OF HEGEMONIC STABILITY

The Cold War ended with the victory of “the world of the sea” over the “world of land”, i.e. The United States of America. According to Mahan’s and Spykman’s beliefs, political and economic power based on favorable maritime position prevailed and thereby justify their teachings which were by then widely accepted and encouraged. As it was already explained in the introduction, the defeated side retreated, trying to consolidate by avoiding confrontation in any field until eventual recovery, while the winner objectively came to the position that there is no worthy opponent – and it become a global power. Consequently, the US came in the position to exploit success, or there were in a position to regulate international relations in accordance to their interests. Models and justification of such ambitions did not lack, and the settings were contained in the “Theory of hegemonic stability”, which, according to rule, finds supporters located in countries that are up to this role, but also to those who enjoyed by their favor. (Kilibarda 2008).

According to Carles Kegli, hegemon is a single, extremely powerful state who has overwhelming influence on the global system. The theory of hegemonic stability present set of theories that claim that the establishment of the hegemony of global domination by a large force is necessary condition for making global order in commercial transactions and international military security. The theory assumes that stable world order requires a dominant world leader who would punish aggressors who threaten the status quo and to also to prevent explosive competition between long rivalries competing forces to escalate into a major systematic war. (Kegli 2004).

Charles Kindleberger laid the foundations of the Theory of hegemonic stability in his work considering causes and consequences of the Great Depression from 1929 (UK Essays, 2015). His considerations suggest that international system of trade and finance, in order to function, must be based on hegemony. Large and powerful countries are attributed the ability to stabilize the world economy, since only they possess such capabilities. From this point of view, but also from the fact that the interests of the hegemon in the world's largest economy are the biggest, derived necessity of their acceptance to take also the largest responsibilities and consequently by being on the leading position. Robert Keohane upgraded theory of hegemonic stability, primarily from the economic standpoint (UK Essays 2015). He believes that the domination of one country benefits to other regimes - smaller countries, in establishing a relatively precise and acceptable economic system. Any decline in the hegemonic system would endanger the stability of the economic system of the countries that emerged from the accepted hierarchical organization. According to Keohane , in order for one country to get in the position to become hegemon, it has to achieve control of raw materials, sources of capital, to control the market, as well as to have an advantage over the competition in the production of goods of high value. Also, it

must have the capability of creating and enforcing international rules, and unquestionably to be dominant in the economic, technological and military terms.

The theory of hegemonic stability was also supplemented by Robert Gilpin, who claimed that liberal economy of the hegemon is a basic requirement for the establishment of the international economy. In addition, it implies that the hegemon is the center of the international order and the economy, who according to its abilities and needs, creates and maintains international order that provides public goods aimed to improve and maintain stability. Such interpretations could be applicable in the circumstances of a unipolar world and the existence of a single hegemon within it (UK Essays 2015).

This theory implies the existence of one dominant state and hierarchical organization within the international community, which is criticized and challenges. Neither one of the previously mentioned thinkers did not question the need of the existence of hegemon on the global stage. Moreover, its existence is considered to be necessary and desirable. Although interpretations described above imply the existence of only one dominant force as the role of hegemon, the Cold War has shown that it is possible co-existence of the two hegemons in their own areas of influence possible, whereby they are able to mutually exhaust and destabilize, until the final survival of only one of them. The position in which US found at the end of the Cold War precisely correspond to the conditions described in the Theory of hegemonic stability. The US is recognized as a country invited to ensure international peace and stability by provision of the common good and restraining opponents.

MODERN UNDERSTANDING OF THE POSITION OF THE UNITED STATES: A GLOBAL LEADER OR HEGEMON?

Although the US remained the only global power after the end of the Cold War, the prospects for eternal peace do not exist. The principle of the existence of the world without armed conflict was rejected in the works of many authors, and liberal conception of the world has not claimed the preponderance compared to a realistic approach. The high degree of contradictions among the modern states is partly sidelined, although not completely rejected, while at the same time the high degree of interdependence was emphasized. Similarly to Mahan's commitment for a presence in the international framework in order to realize national interests, the majority of American contemporary theorists said that the US presence in the world is the vital strategic interest for the future of this country. The reasons given by the US theorists against US isolationism are reduced to dependence on trade and contacts with the world in general and therefore cannot allow the international environment to be created spontaneously or under the influence of some other upcoming power or coalition.

Also, the eventual withdrawal into isolation would cause instability in the world and in the long run would jeopardize American interests. Last, in the case a new dominant forces – hegemon appear, the US would have to be further engaged to preserve the global balance, but with a much stronger capacity, greater material and human losses. From the above it follows inevitably that the constant and moderate presence in different regions of the world and addressing global issues is far more cost-effective and safer option than isolationism. Also, one of the fundamental geostrategic interests of the US is prevention of emergence of planetary “player” who would be able to challenge their leadership. This is

one of the things Spykman predicted with assertion that one of the main guidelines to the future operation of the US foreign policy will be resisting the creation of the Eurasian hegemon.

One of the scholars who advocate the active US approach to foreign policy is Joseph Nye. Nye developed a bit different way of understanding international relations, combining the traditional categories of security forces, power and balance of power with the new, changed understanding based on the principle of so-called soft power (Nye 2004). However, he is claiming that geo-economics has not fully replaced geopolitics and military forces still play a relevant role, even among the great powers, and that the US military presence is very desirable in certain parts of the world. Nye notes that “most of the countries in East Asia welcome the presence of US troops as a policy of insurance against volatile neighbors. As it is described by the Ministry of Defense, one of the missions of US troops abroad is to “shape the environment”. (Nye 2004). Therefore Nye do not criticize the US presence on the global level and active approach to foreign policy, but arguments in favor of considering other means to fulfill the American national interest.

Stressing the so-called soft power, he does not reject entirely the classical values of geopolitics, military and economic power. In his criticism of the definition of the position of the United States after the Cold War, Nye challenged its role as hegemon. Although some analysts compare the current role of the US with the rise and fall of Great Britain Empire, Nye indicates significant differences in favor of his thesis. Unlike the United States, Great Britain never had domination as the United States has today. Despite the opinion that we are witnessing “the American empire”, the facts show that the US has no colonies, which create maneuver space that Britain never had. Also, one cannot ignore the geographical factor that provides United States adequate protection since they are surrounded by oceans and countries that do not pose a threat. Unlike the British Empire, the United States rely largely on its own armed forces, which in conditions of increasing nationalism does not represent a serious obstacle for entry into the armed conflict. (Diplomatija 2015).

Despite of different definitions of hegemony and its placing in relation to imperialism, Nye asserts that the United States is clear evidence that the hegemon does not need to have formally empire. If the hegemony is considered to be the ability to impose the rules of the international system, it remains unclear exactly how much impact the hegemon must achieve on the other forces. Considering the economic point of view which equated hegemon with the control of most of the resources of power, Nye puts into question the example of the British Empire from the XIX century, which in spite of the naval domination, was not leading to GDP and military spending (Diplomatija, 2015). Furthermore, in the period after the Second World War, the USSR rivaled in the military power more than four decades, while the US were economically dominant. This balance of power is limited maneuver space among each other, whereby the US was the dominant mainly in North and South America and Western Europe, which accounted less than half of the world. The territory of China, India, Indonesia and the countries of the Warsaw Pact remained outside their positive impact. Nye concludes that the position of the United States can rather be called “half-hegemony”, and in relation to the disproportion of indicators share in the world economy, where USA in share global GDP in accounts for about 25%, “primacy” would be probably the most accurate description of the current position of the USA in international relations. (Diplomatija 2015). One of the most eminent American

geopolitician and geostrategic Zbigniew Brzezinski gave the US foreign policy performance analysis conducted on the basis of hypotheses about the consequences of the potential withdrawal of US geo-strategic core regions of Europe, the Far East and the Persian Gulf.

According to Brzezinski, withdrawing the US from these regions would lead to a restart of the arms race and making security arrangements with Russia in Europe, the Far East, with a very probable war on the Korean peninsula, and to the domination of Iran in the Persian Gulf. The above scenario would lead to major political crisis and severe political instability in all regions. Therefore a possible US defensive strategy brought into question the loyalty of the most important US military and political allies - the European Union, the main energy supplier (Gulf countries), and would be brought into question relations with Japan as the most important US ally in the Far East. (Brzezinski 2004). Brzezinski does not question the need for global dominance of the United States and suggests that their global leadership is essential. In addition to Brzezinski, one of the giants of American geopolitical thought Colin Gray discusses the implications of a possible return to the US (neo) isolationism. Gray also believes that the key reasons the US residue in world affairs and especially have active presence on the territory of the Eurasian security reasons and arrangements. He estimates that the US withdrawal from international politics would led to a convergence of challenges and threats to US interests "closer to its borders" and that American (neo) isolationism would led to the loss of the leading position in NATO. US withdrawal would lead to a distortion of the current role and unity in NATO. In the European region it would, almost certainly, lead to a return to the historical understanding of the balance of power among the major countries of the Old Continent, Germany, V. Britain and France (Gray 1988). Due to this, the global US leadership is necessary for the protection of national interests.

The modern views of US foreign policy presence and performance, and in a contrary of the isolationism, are represented by researchers from the famous RAND Corporation, who point out that the US will remain present on the international scene, mainly due to the necessity of safeguarding its own economy, as well as the political and security reasons. The part of the book "*Sources of Conflict in the 21st Century: Regional Futures and US strategy*" under the heading "*Overview of the future security environment*" researchers from RAND institution argue that the US will remain "engaged as a key player on the global stage in the early years of the XXI century" (Khallized et al. 1998) and that the US armed forces will play a key role in a wide range of obligations and events, starting from the role in the collective defense to the implementation of different types of aid operations. Similarly as Brzezinski and Gray, RAND's researchers estimate that the eventual implications of US withdrawal from international policy would be significant. According to this view, the withdrawal would inevitably lead to the spread of instability and conflict, and the weakening of former allies and strengthening former adversaries. Also, in the same part, there is one interesting argument, according to which the dragging "within the US military establishment would be dramatically reduced with the reduction of the budget". (Gray 1988). Modern understanding of the position of the US in the aftermath of the Cold War that were previously considered bring to prejudice the use of the term "hegemon", probably because of the negative historical legacy, or attachment to imperialist expeditions in the past and the consequences that left. In the contrary, domination, global leadership and primacy are terms that seek to define the necessity of the leading role of the

US in the contemporary world, which is considered crucial for the realization of national interests and the preservation of the current system at the global level.

From the standpoint of the US Strategy of the national security, the preservation of peace and international relations based on law are priorities that cannot be achieved without the leading role of the United States. With the reference to the terms “lead (lead / leader / leadership)” 94 times in the text, it clearly points to the vision of their role in the XXI century on a global level. (Foreign Affairs 2015).

CONCLUSION

The United States are dominant force in four decisive domains of global power: military, economical, technological and cultural. Although the dominance in these segments individually significantly reduced from the 70's of the last century, it still gives the US political force that no other country has. The combination of these four attributes makes the US a global force. Although after the Second World War occurred the period of the conflict of the two different concepts and visions of world politics, the period of Cold War, the influence of USA on the west and USSR on the eastern hemisphere, justified the theory that it is possible to have the two dominant forces - hegemonies, as they are called by some thinkers. The very nature of the hegemon to remain the only dominant force inevitably led to mutual competition in all spheres of social development, and hence exhaustion, until the final victory and survival of one of them. Events such as the unification of Germany and the disintegration of the Soviet Union marked the end of the Cold War and the victory of the United States. The policy of internationalism prevailed over the policy of isolationism and also justified and allowed the United States dominance on the global level which have not have ever reached before. In the historical period from just before World War II until the end of the Cold War, the outstanding Western thinkers had undivided opinion about the need for USA dominance on a global scale. While some describe the dominance of the US as hegemony and compared it with the British Empire, others carefully avoid using that term, precisely because of the historical legacy the famous Empire had. Using terms such as “global leadership”, “primacy”, “half-hegemon”, “key player”, “domination” and other contemporary thinkers in any segment do not allow the possibility of the existence of any other dominant forces to counter the United States. What's more, hypothetical consideration and immediately negates any possibility of (self-) isolation of the United States in the aftermath of the Cold War with an adequate statement of reasons for the necessity of US dominance at the global level.

Although the dominant role of the US on the global level is undisputed whatever the terminology defining such roles, the time ahead will show whether the latest geopolitical developments, the growing role of the Eastern Hemisphere and Eurasian integration, will mark the end of a period of complete domination by one power and eventual (re) start of the epoch of the global distribution of power and influence.

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THE VALUE POSTULATES AND THE TRANSFORMATION OF TRANSITION SOCIETIES IN SOUTH EAST EUROPE

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Abstract

The European idea of uniting the countries of the European continent is the impetus for attracting and transformation of post communist societies. The process of harmonization of legislation is a systematic attempt at regulation of relations in society through the establishment of valuable principles and adoption of established standards in the management of states and economies. The dilemma is whether it is possible a sustainable development transformation by simply copying the institutional and legal system solutions from Europe, without involving moral value body of principles and standards in ruling the states? The purpose of the paper is to offer a reasoned response on ways how this collision to be resolved, whether the transition can be performed only in a systematic manner, institutionally and legally, or must go in parallel with social intervention in the cultural set and moral value corpus based on verified and approved ethical values, principles and standards.

Key words: Europe; harmonization; transformation; transition; values; principles; standards

INTRODUCTION

The former communist and socialist countries from South Eastern Europe (SEE) are a striking example that underlines the seriousness and delicacy of the process of transition from one social system to another, from one social values in others. The countries of this region, also called transition economies, went into a continuous process of deep internal social change. Changes are taking place at all levels, starting from the social order, constitution of democratic political orders and composing a new political system that would be postulated on a completely new democratic structure, and therefore new economic foundations of the system.

Issues that are opening in all their vigor are whether the economic model of arranging the material base of these societies will be able to meet the new societal needs and would be able to follow the serious requirements for prosperity and quality of life which inherently arise from the premises of the democratic model of western European type. But at the same time, whether the entire concept can enter the track of success and prosperity, with the existing moral - valued matrix and cultural habits and routines in the

life of the population, as well as with the transferred old attitude toward the work and life in general, i.e. with an old character and nature of existence.

Transition economies and societies for many years have been a subject to a massive industrialization, where heavy industry was the engine of society, and absorber of the majority of the population for labor. For many years, the entrepreneurial spirit of individuals was heavily oppressed, but also the overall terms and conditions for conducting business activities had no legal or political support from the system.

Hence, the current moment in these transition societies reflect the old model of running economies, which was dominated by the serious state influence and deep involvement of political elites in businesses. If we add the old cultural matrix of understanding of ownership as “everybody's and nobody's” and the obvious lack of moral values, virtues and noble principles and integrity, then the situation becomes more complex in every sense. There is a scientific consent, empirically grounded, about the necessity of introducing these moral and ethical codes in ruling the states and managing the economy. These principles are needed in order to be provided equal positions and opportunities for each and everyone in the society, through building a new and different standard in the approach and conduct of economic and business activities in the newly emerged conditions. Corruption, lack of transparency and democratic rule of law, party – state symbiosis and autocratic tendencies, as well all other heavy malformations in ruling the transitional societies will be limited by the overall pressure from this type of a value and virtue sensitive societies.

The European idea of unification of the European continent based on western developed democratic political model tried to draw transition societies in his flock, offering a new model of prosperous societies. In addition, through a process of the so-called harmonization of legislation is making an attempt to norm relations in society in a different way, with the ultimate goal to establish new values, principles and integrity models, but also to adopt new standards in the conduct and management of countries and economies. The result of such an effort has oscillatory character. The estimation is that religious moment and impact by the moral - value corpus derived from the faith in people's lives is one of the components that lead to the answer why some societies are more successful than others on the ground in Europe primarily, and more generally worldwide. Value based cultural matrix of population developed in transitional societies, predominantly with Catholic provenance, enable faster and more effectively accommodation to the new social conditions and relationships, and faster and more efficient incorporation of the newly offered model of prosperous societies. Unlike the set of societies with predominantly Orthodox background, the differences are obvious. These societies are still dominated by the phrase “endless transition”, and are still struggling with serious recurrence of the old system. They are continually vulnerable to internal friction and turmoil in the mechanisms of functioning of their societal systems.

The question which we will try to answer from a different non-standard point of view refers to the dilemma whether it is even possible to raise successful, efficient and effective transformation of transitional societies and economies without changing the cultural matrix and without resetting the moral value body of principles and standards of ruling economies and states. Whether it is even possible an efficient, effective and above all sustainable development transformation of the economy and industry in SEE's transition countries by simply copying the institutional and legal system's solutions from the

developed Western world? Or, whether there is any influence and how big is that influence of cultural attitudes and ethical - moral values and tenets of transitional nations and societies on the overall social, economic and industrial development? Is there any perspective, this collision to be resolved systematically, institutionally and legally only, or must go in parallel with social intervention in the cultural and moral value set, based on verified and proven ethical values, principles and standards?

The estimate is that the accelerated economic and industrial growth and development of transitional economies is significantly limited by the cultural value conditions that persist in mentioned nations and societies. The existing moral - value basis on which was built the order in these societies is, or an influential factor for accelerated progress and prosperity in all areas of life or slowdown and backsliding of the development processes.

So far the three predominantly classical factors of production: land, labor and capital are at the end of its impact on the obvious need for accelerated growth of the economies and the development of overall relations in society, reflected primarily by popular demand and pressure of population for better quality of life in each sense. On the societal scene appear new opportunities that offer new prospects for faster economic growth and sustainable development. "With the creative industries or as some call them - creative economy, probably ending time of the three classical factors of production: land, labor and capital. The creative industries are under major impact by environment as the fourth factor of production. It covers functional institutions, enforcement of laws, rule of law, culture and religion that define the mentality in the broadest sense and business ethics and ethics in the narrow economic sense." (Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Macedonia and the British Council in Macedonia 2010). In that context, more and more accepted standpoint is that religion and the value based set of Christian beliefs have a serious impact on the reshuffling the priorities resetting the mindset and changing the mentality in broad sense, but also on business ethics in the narrow economic sense.

PREMISES BY THE FAITH RELIGIOUS CORPUS

The process of harmonization of legislation in the transitional societies with the European legislation aims to impose new value models, to introduce new virtue principles and to establish new integrity standards in the societies. Ultimate goal is to reveal new rules of state performance in order to be achieved new horizons toward progress and prosperity.

In the historical context, these issues are analyzed in science since the time of Max Weber, who addresses the Protestant ethic and its impact on the profiling of the spirit of capitalism and emphasizes the argument that the Christian reformation made a relevant contribution to a different behavior and approach to work.

One of the main segments of the ideology of Martin Luther, who is one of the key reformers in Christianity, which differed from the previous climate in the Catholic Church, was his teaching on the job. For Luther the work is holy and good. Martin Luther put the accent on individuality versus group membership, which was promoted by the Catholic Church. These beliefs and convictions form positive traits in humans, so that the followers of these Protestant denominations were people who got used to work hard, because Martin Luther proclaimed the work as a sacred, then people who are thrifty and people whose life, work and savings are methodologically planned.

From a sociological perspective, the Protestant beliefs were the catalyst of modern capitalism in the western world. Thus Max Weber concludes that it was the Protestant Reformation that has planted the seeds of which subsequently sprouted advanced capitalism and that the Christian faith with the value and virtue based ideology and concept of structuring the lives of individuals and societies as a whole, has the potential to cause positive and progressive social changes.

The values and the impact on social development

The values and culture belong to the so-called mental software (Hofstede 2001) and relate mainly to individuals, but also to collectives. The value is defined differently by different authors.¹ To say about a particular person that there are values in its character, is as to say that this person has sustained belief that a certain type of behavior, personally and socially is more preferred. (Rokeach 1972)

The term value is often equated with the attitudes and beliefs. When these values, attitudes or beliefs will be connected in a group, they reach a value system that often does not have to be in inner harmony, for example, the values of “liberty” and “equality”. According to Bem (1970), values determine our subjective definition of rationality. They derived from our own personal experience or from an external authority.

Furthermore, Hofstede (2001) considers that the values can be measured by answers to questionnaires submitted to larger reference group of respondents, based on the recognition that our perception is colored by our value judgments, on the general level of society, but as well in the process of political socialization, phase in which the political views of an individual as a political being are used to be *de facto* profiled.

On the other hand, the anthropological definition of culture has reached a certain consensus in the literature. Kreber and Parsons (1958) define interdisciplinary culture as transmitted and created content and pattern of values, ideas and other symbolic systems as significant factors that profiled human behavior. Values and culture are issues that directly affect cultural change in society and hence on the overall social and economic conditions.

Huntington (1996), Putnam (1993) and Fukuyama (1995) argue that cultural traditions are significantly sustainable and that they seriously impact the profiling of political and economic behavior in society.

On the other hand are modern theories, according to which the economic and industrial development has a certain connection with some coherent cultural deviations from traditional value systems - Marx, Weber, Bell and Toffler. (Inglehart and, Welzel 2005, 18-19). Although socio - economic development tends to produce systematic changes in people's attitudes, beliefs and expectations as the outcome of their life, the impact of cultural traditions does not disappear, on the contrary shows a serious level of resistance to change. Value systems of religious belief have striking durability and resistance to change. In contrast, values have a serious impact on the changes in society and continue to reflect the social and historical heritage. (Inglehart and Welzel 2005, 20). From this perspective, Weber (1904) further argues that traditional religious values have long-term impact in general and the different cultural characteristics run through the extremely long period and

¹ More about the values and morally based cultural matrix in the Doctoral Dissertation: Ristovski Ljupco. 2012. “*Modeling of Political Orders through Biblical Prism*” DD., European University.

thoroughly are profiling the political and economic performance of societies. Inglehart and Welzel, in their extensive and fairly detailed study of the interaction between cultural and socio - economic changes, through in-depth quantitative analysis proved that the influence goes both ways. (World Values Surveys Association 2015).

The analysis of the Fukuyama's book "Trust: Social Virtues and the Creation of Prosperity", a group of American professors led by Michael Goldsbi (Quddus, Goldsby and Farooque 2000, 87-98) make a critical review of the main thesis of Fukuyama, in which culture and cultural values are the main source of contribution to prosperity of nations. This book actually makes a serious attempt to link intangible factors to tangible factors for the development of nations and societies, and in that context, the trust is taken as a particularly relevant factor that fosters prosperity of nations and states. Fukuyama takes the example of America, Germany and Japan (mainly due to the paternalistic attitude to work). The Protestant Christian ethics in the work as a high cultural value for individuals who are faithful in God has been taken as a postulate for America. Remarks are with regard to a lack of precision mechanisms and indicators on the basis of which would be measured degree of confidence present in the society and among citizens. Hence the critics claim the need for more précised measuring what level of confidence has how much influence to the material prosperity of the nation.

Despite certain shortcomings, the basic tenet of which the Fukuyama's thesis are based is accepted as a serious achievement towards that which since the days of Adam Smith takes as a foundation for economic sciences, and that is that all the analysis in the material sphere of the economy and society must be seen in a broader context, i.e. the total cultural, sociological, political and social achievements of nations and states.

Social capital and its impact on economic performance are of concern to many other studies in recent years. Joseph Stiglitz, chief economist of the World Bank (1997-2000), strongly emphasizes the importance of social capital and institutions, capacity building and legal framework as for economies in transition and for developing countries as well. He argues that the failure of the liberal democratic model in the east - European countries in the period of post-communism is due to the low value cultural level of communication amongst communities, individuals, and hence increased mistrust in society impact negatively on the overall democratic achievements and the socio - economic development of these societies. Stiglitz therefore proposes previous preparation of the transition societies in terms of encouragement to create an appropriate institutions and to develop elements of social capital based on cultural values and individual valor in humans, and then to go with the transition to economic liberalization and high industrialization. (Marshall 2000).

Extremely important for the analysis is the cultural aspect i.e. the extent of the value of political culture as a major factor that affects the release of the democratic environment in society as a precondition or impetus for accelerated economic development and overall prosperity of societies.

Post - communist transitional societies and the EU

In the work “Religion and the transition to the post - communist countries” (Miniarik 2011) the author analyzes the different trajectories of transition that give different results between post - communist societies. Explication is based on the assumption that the institutions are determined by the fundamental cultural norms, such as those which are represented by religions. The impact of religion on institutional change in the transition process, according to the author goes through several channels: Western Christianity encourages economic freedom, just like Catholicism, although on a smaller scale and intensity. The Orthodox Christianity seems to be less interested in economic freedom and lastly Muslim believers and people have a negative impact on these freedoms. Deeper analysis, according to the author, showed that the impact is not uniform in all aspects of individual freedoms covered by the Index of Economic Freedom. And in that context Western Christianity posed by Protestantism tends to show higher standards in the areas of property rights, business, and trade and investment freedoms.

Miniarik deepens the analysis in terms of religion and economic attitude toward business (Miniarik 2014), the material wealth and finance and confirms the findings according to which faith and religion is continually increasing its impact on individual economic views and attitude toward work, especially in terms of pro - market and pro - development attitudes. But he also concludes that depending on the religious domination of the population, the intensity of the obstacles to a successful transition from centrally - planned economies to the free market is differing from state to state, and hence the successful, efficient and effective transition and adaptation to the EU standards varies from country to country. Samuel Huntington however, in his paper “Democracy's Third Wave”, taken as a reference title in the book “Source for Democracy” (Dahl, Shapiro, Cheibub 2003, 93-94), writes that historically, there is a strict correlation between Western Christendom and democracy. He says that the first waves were predominantly Protestant, and in the early 70s of the last century the wave has been extended to the predominantly Catholic countries. One of the main factors that Huntington lists for the third wave of transition to democracy is the change in doctrine and activities of the Catholic Church, manifested at the Second Vatican Council (1963-1965), when in fact has been initiated the transformation of the general attitude of the church so that the defenders of the “*status quo*” position of authoritarianism, have transformed themselves into its classic opponents.

Following that logic, the new wave of democratization that include socialism and communist regimes of Eastern blocks alliance is actually the wave of transition and adaptation to the democratic model of Western provenance. The process occurs in a predominantly Orthodox Christian countries (except the few Catholic who belonged to the eponymous bloc and were also subject to the mentioned transition processes), which on the other hand, were severely restricted and burdened with many hindrances in executing free religious and spiritual practices, but also in their overall growth and development.

Hence, more modern analyzes for assessing the success of this transition transfer point to serious shortcomings in the implementation of the same. Of course, different areas of science approach the situation from different perspectives. Some are supporters of transforming cultural matrix according to a certain value model - Ingelhart and Welzen (2005), Nath (2007), Barro and McClure (2003) Bollen (1980), while others keep purely to economic performances of the system, overestimating the importance of capital and its

impact on the development of societies. Moreover, they oppose the standpoints that claim that the overall societal success is largely determined by the cultural diversity of societies and nations. (De Soto 2000).

The process of simply undertaking the EU legal system and harmonization of the legislation of these countries with the European Union's norms according to those "imposed" standards does not give the expected results² as such that have been experienced by the developed Western democracies which are of predominantly Protestant provenance. This means that there is a need to furthermore explore all other relevant factors that might impact the primary purpose as it is the final adaptation to EU standards, and encouraging positive change in attitudes and behavior patterns.

In the book "The Secret of the Prosperous Nations" (Ristovski 2009) argument in this regard is given in discovering the link between socio - economic development and democratic achievements of the predominantly Protestant states. In the book has been presented relevant evidence that was empirically confirmed by a high degree positive correlation between the Prosperity Index - Human Development Index (HDI)³ or the so called Index of Well-Being, from one side, and the socio-economic performance of the society as well as the overall democratic achievements, from the other side.

In this respect almost identical are the results of the comparative analysis by the Gallup Index of Individual (Subjective) Well - Being and prosperity of the nation (Gallup - Healthways Well-Being Index - WBI), and the so called Scale of valuation of life and its quality, measuring the life satisfaction or subjective well-being (Cantril Ladder Scale), then The Legatum Prosperity Index - The Legatum Institute and the Index of Lifetime Achievements by the European Foundation for Improvement of the Living and Working Conditions which issues regular annual reports in an attempt to investigate the quality of life in Europe, in all member states and candidate countries.

The results of the mentioned indexation show serious advantage, predominantly in favor to the Protestant states and nations, which in all relevant surveys and rankings occupy the first twenty places in the world, during several consecutive years.

CONCLUSION

The growing need of the world population for better quality of life and greater personal fulfillment in terms of reaching the subjective sense of satisfaction with the achievements in their life, facilitate the ambition of states and societies for accelerated economic growth and sustainable development. The classic factors for development are constantly diminishing their influence, so they are no longer a key component on the basis of which countries and societies may plan their future faster development.

Immaterial sphere has emerged as one of the potential factors that might increasingly determine future relations and affect more intensively the overall societal action toward higher economic growth rates and toward certain sustainable development. In this context, the value and virtue based faith principles and the religious moment in general suppose to occupy significant space on the social scene.

² Fast, efficient and effective changes in all areas of the social life, followed by economic growth and sustainable development in crucial segments of the society.

³ HDI is the UNDP Index of Prosperity, introduced to measure the prosperity and quality of life in general, combining the normal values of the longevity of life, literacy, access to education and GDP *per capita*.

Prosperous societies in its historical dimension have been empirically perceived as developed democracies of the west - European model desired by many nations and states, and almost all of them are with Christian protestant religious background.

The European uniting idea attracts many countries to apply for membership. The process of harmonization of the legislation and transformation of the societal model during the negotiations for membership is a serious effort and cost a lot. But despite the enormous social effort and investment, this concept still fails to become fully efficient and successful. The conclusion is that it is necessary to undertake measures that might incentive changes to the cultural matrix and the value based model of organizing the societies.

Hence, the assumption is that the central task of the EU will be to ensure basic assumptions and preconditions for the kind of a cultural reform aimed to reformulate the cultural matrix of the population; a process in which religion or precisely the faith based Christian moral corpus has serious potential to play increasing role in positive transformation of the transition societies.

Of course, secularism will have to maintain and guaranty a position of neutrality of the church as a religious institution and keep the church aside from ruling the states and societies which is quite different from supporting the individual steps of faith and the change that it offers on an individual level. The whole set of expected cultural value shifts and possibly new established value principles and premises that aim toward new standards might emerge as basic prerequisites for successful, efficient and effective progress to higher levels of prosperity for the transition societies and nations on the European soil.

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THE COMPATIBILITY OF WOMEN'S INVOLVEMENT IN POLITICS AND THE PROCESS OF EURO-INTEGRATION IN THE MODERN GEORGIAN REALITY

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Abstract

Nowadays, women's involvement in politics is a quite hot discussion topic among public associations and politicians. It is highlighted in various events. It is a fact that the country has to make certain legislative changes for the purpose of women's (political) activation. It will help to fulfill the international obligations, and to establish (some/additional/further) democratic principles in Georgia and accelerate the country's process of European integration at the same time. Based on the attitude of women's political engagement issue in Georgia, with the support of Georgia's Euro-integration strategy, public organizations and politicians, public awareness and the certain support of political parties, it is possible that in the nearest future the mentioned issue will be given wider resonance and it will be defined the legislative level in order to be more supported, what will add to growth of the women's engagement

Key words: Politics; Government; Women's Involvement; Quota; Euro integration

INTRODUCTION

The above mentioned issue is a quite hot topic for public associations and politicians. It is shown by the various events which are related to the growth of female representatives in the country's political and social life. However, we have to say that the existing reality is far away from the demands of a democratic state. Therefore, in Georgia, by the support of civil society, the adoption of an appropriate legislation, in order to defend the gender equality in the representative establishments and to promote women's engagement in the country's political processes is in the agenda. It will guarantee the approach to the modern legal society standards. According to the urgency of the topic in Georgia, the aim of our research is to study and analyze the existing empirical materials. The question of our research topic is: "What is the nowadays attitude towards the issue and what kind of necessary conditions have to be created for women's involvement in politics"?

As the political involvement of women is one of the main indicators of modern democracy and important detail of European partnership (it is mentioned in many program documents). According to the existing situation, the hypothesis of our work is based on the state ongoing processes to create necessary conditions which will demand the growth of women's involvement in politics.

Georgia has taken the obligation for establishing gender equality according to the international legal and political standards since 1994, when it joined to the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) - the mentioned convention was adopted by UN in 1979, it entered into force in 1981 - where except the national governmental report, the alternative reports of NGO-s must be presented (at least once in every 4 years). The recommendations of the committee are worked out on the bases of their discussions. In the adopted declaration and working plan within Beijing conference in 1995, (Beijing Fourth World Conference is considered as a new step for improving women's position) where Georgia took part, among the top 12 priority sphere the women's involvement in state governance and decision making process was claimed as one of the key points. Georgia as a member of United Nation is obliged to implement the Resolution 1325 which was adopted in 2000. In the mentioned resolution, the importance of women in decision making process and the necessity of women engagement in the humanitarian and human rights missions are highlighted. One of the contributing factors for the establishment of democracy in Georgia and its development will be the women's engagement in the country's political processes and the fulfillment of the taken international and local obligations.

THE EVENTS TO PROMOTE WOMEN'S INVOLVEMENT IN THE GEORGIAN POLITICS

We have to highlight that in 2013, with the support of public sector - Georgian Parliament adopted a resolution named "The Civil Plan for Implementation of Gender Equality Policy for the Scheduled 2014-2016 Events" (Reports of Session 48. 2015), and here also one of the 8 main directions, "Gender and Politics" - was the key one. The following steps should be taken in the decision making process in order to promote the women's participation and to reach the set goals:

1. The main goal for equal participation of men and women in the political life could be achieved by:
 - a) Cooperation with political parties in order to increase the information and knowledge of the political parties about gender equality and to consider the aspects of gender equality in the political parties programs.
 - b) The cooperation of government with political parties, encouraging the implementation of the quota of women representatives according to the Georgian law in electoral structures.
 - c) To considering gender balance in the electoral list.
2. To increase the number of women in electoral structures, government needs to refine certain relevant legislation.
3. To increase the number of within the decision making process in the ministries and other institutions and to eliminate the obstacles preventing the women's promotion in higher positions.

All this speaks about the fact that in recent years here in Georgia - many discussions and events are held and it has gained a systematic character. For this purpose either local or international organizations have held various events (conferences, discussions, surveys and polls, etc.). The Georgian government tries to eradicate this problem and engage as many women as possible in political life of country and establish international standards for gender equality. The urgency of this topic is caused by the fact that we have fewer women in the parliament than other countries in our region (Reports of Round Table 2013). It is highlighted that, “Women’s involvement in the political processes strengthens the political effectiveness and expands the political agenda”. (Donadze and Kiknadze 2006). That is why many various international and local activities in Georgia are carried out, in order to eliminate these shortcomings. Not less important is that the positive sides of women’s engagement in politics are often discussed. (Khomeriki 2006). Women’s activation is supported by the civil sector too, which pays much attention in the country nowadays and advocates the gender quota since July 2014 (Gender Quota for political parties, election blocs: it was mandatory for them to have different sex representatives in the name list. According to this system, in case of parliamentary elections in the Georgian parliament there must be 38 women, e.g. it is 25% of all parliament members). The gender issue is actively discussed on governmental level. The “Amendment of Gender Equality in Georgian Legislation” according to the international legal standards is especially discussed and planned.

It has to be said that the political parties in the pre-election period paid great attention to the gender issue and mentioned that in their plans and documents. However, we can claim that they did not fulfill their promises with regard to the mentioned issue neither in Parliamentary Election 2012) nor the presidential (2013) and the local self-governmental elections (2014).

It is true that according to the results of the parliamentary election in 2012 the number of women in the Parliament increased (twice), what exceeds all the previous indicators. But still the situation leaves much to be desired. As the number of women-candidate was very low, (see: Table 1) - the use of quota for 16 voluntary election subject was - 2 women out of 10 candidates will have state funding, and will get 10 percent of supplement (regarding to the recommendations of the Venice Commission and the amendments of “The Political Coalitions Law” (28.12.2011) in order to increase women’s political activity, but this was fulfilled only by 6 political subjects out of 16. (Statement of Preliminary Findings and Conclusions 2015).

Table 1. (Data of Ceeko, for 2012 Elections)

List	Total number of registered women 788	Total number of candidates: 2742
Proportional	729	Total percentage of women candidates 28.74%.
Majoritarian	59	

Here we have to mention that neither of the both parties - Georgian Dream and National Movement did not fulfill the norm. The electoral list presented by “National Movement” was violated at the second dozen, as for “Georgian Dream” at the top ten. By the proportional system, “National Movement” included in the electoral list 17 women out

of 155 candidates, and “Georgian Dream” 33 out of 200. Though we have to say that in the framework of the project (“Strengthening democratic institutions in Georgia”) which was financed by the Embassy of the Netherlands, they express the readiness to involve more women in the country’s political processes. But then the situation drastically changed. It must be highlighted that, the aim of the United National Movement is to “engage equal number of women and men in the country’s political life. For this reason, they need to establish measures to encourage the political parties to meet the challenges. The amendments in the Election Code represent an example of this: according to these amendments, if a party has 2 women out of 10 in his electoral list it will gain additional 10% of the state funding. The party created a new unit: Gender Equality Department. Its aim is to support gender equality in the decision making and public opinion forming process and to promoting gender equality at all levels of the country's democratic governance. The United National Movement promotes women’s engagement in the peace making process at international and local level. To support such kind of activities, a General Council is set up in the Georgian parliament by the initiative of the “United National Movement” Fraction (See: Partiebi.ge).

According to the “Georgian Dream’s” answer: “The number of female representative must grow in both directions: within the parties and in general politics as well. A women wing is set up in the coalition of “Georgian Dream”. It is considered as a strengthening mechanism of intermediate-level working group. The leader of the women’s group is a member of the party’s political council, which is a decision making body. In order to increase women’s participation in the decision making process, one can be promoted from the intermediate level to an upper one. This way the political party has a chance of reaching the desired model in a short term, which is opposite to the model “activist women and decision making men”. As for the common political process, the aim of the coalition is to support the existing legislative norm which is scheduled in the parliamentary elections list. However, a norm is only a starting point and is not a satisfactory one. One of the top-priority issues of the parties or the future national or local elections is to have more women candidates in the list. Besides, a great attention is paid to the number of majoritarian candidates, they do their best to have more women candidates there too (See: Partiebi.ge).

As we can see, despite the fact that in the program document there is little mentioned about the women’s participation, they do their best to explain orally what they have not written and promise to engage as much women as possible. During the presidential elections of 2013, in the framework of this project, the view of the presidential candidate of the “Georgian Dream” coalition partially coincides with the view of the same party when it came to the parliamentary elections of 2012.

The presidential candidate of “National Movement” - David Bakradze gave quite short answer about the gender issue he said: that he did not think that it is a good idea to accelerate the transformation of all forms of mainstreaming forms and added that, of course, “National Movement” was happy to support the engagement of more women in the country’s political life and processes. As for the presidential candidate of “Georgian Dream”, he gave a detailed speech about the above mentioned issue and said that Georgia’s indicators of women’s political activation were far behind the European one. Before the elections of 2012 the parliament had only 6% of women representatives – the lowest indicator among OSCE member states. However after the same parliamentary elections the

situation changed in a positive manner. Nevertheless, the situation still leaves much to be desired either within the national legislative bodies and local self-government or the executive power. Women constitute half of the population; therefore the democratic justice requires their participation in the decision making process to be adequate. We cannot talk about real democracy if only 6, 10 or 15% of the women are in the parliament.

Georgia can learn much from the international experience. The first to be done is to put this issue in the social and political agenda. For this purpose, the political will of the ruling party and the will of political elite in general are needed. A very important point is the public work awareness. We have to overcome the stereotypes about the role of women and create such kind of society where each woman will have a chance for self-realization. Women must be engaged in the decision making process and take leading positions. In the way of transforming Georgia into a democratic republic and a human rights-based society, women's role is priceless (Results of Comparing 2014).

It is important that, despite the fact that the women issue is in the first line of the country's agenda (regarding the 2014 self governmental elections the amount of financial incentives was increased if the party had 30% women in their name list), the situation still remained unsatisfactory during the elections regarding the local self-government and the executive institutions. Moreover, no woman has been appointed to the position of mayor or governor. Out of 84 candidates for mayor 12 governing cities, there were only 12 women nominees. Of course, they received low amount votes, and in most cases even the lowest. Here, we have to mention that the ruling coalition "Georgian Dream" named only men candidates for the position of mayor.

When discussing women's involvement in politics, critics appeal to the women's passive attitude toward the politics, and in this case we have to show such kind of statistics, that will make it easier to explain the women's role in policy making. We have to mention the fact that during the elections from 15 July 2014, first time in Georgia happens so that the voter gender was paid a great attention (the report of 2014 by the local self-governmental and executive organs, 2014). In the first round the indicators of women voters was 50.2% (745.614), as for the second round it was 53.91 (332.865) (Preliminary data 2015).

When discussing the issue it is interesting to know the situation about self-governing community governor candidates in the regions. Only 10 out of 59 regions presented women candidates. Only one woman, a candidate from "Georgian Dream" won a governor position in Tianeti region. As for the capital of the country, Tbilisi, out of 10 district governor candidates only one woman got the position and became the governor of Didube (Commission data, 2014). In the late 2014 and early 2015, women movement became very active. The slogan "More Women in Politics" was the message for the community and the government and became their aim. The President of Georgia, Giorgi Margvelashvili, announced 2015 as the women's year (See: www.ipn.ge). On January 15 2015 during the meeting in his residence, he condemned violence against women in Georgia. His announcement was well-timed in spite of the 20th anniversary of the Beijing Declaration when all humanity set up a future plan for women equality. He claimed that the presidential administration supports the promotion of women in politics and added that he wishes that not only more women have the opportunity to serve the country and families but make high-level decisions as well (See: www.ipn.ge).

When discussing women's involvement in the political life of the country at official level it is worth mentioning the international conference "To the Gender Equality – Challenges and Opportunities in the Region of European Neighborhood" which was held in cooperation with Georgian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the United Nation the capital of Georgia, Tbilisi, in 2015. The key points of the conference were: women's political and economic empowerment, elimination of violence against women and girls, and increasing the role of women in peace and security issues.

During the meeting with the participants of the above mentioned conference, the president of Georgia in his speech emphasized syntax: the government had to encourage women to be more active and give them an opportunity to do so in order to build a strong, effective and active society. (See: www.interpressnews.ge).

For this purpose the country needs to create a stable sustainable system for promotion of women. Here, he mentioned the bill about gender balance which will give women an opportunity to come to politics, became more active, create healthier governmental system which will be more sustainable and stronger. In his speech, the ex-prime minister, Irakli Garibashvili, said that they took serious steps for women's activation and hoped that the result would be shown in the next parliamentary elections. (See: www.interpressnews.ge). As for the current premier minister, Giorgi Kvirikashvili, he appreciated the conference and said that it was "a great base", and added that "the country needs to have actively involved women in politics in order to build a democratic state, have suitable politics, economics and social development". (See: www.interpressnews.ge). It is worth mentioning that Giorgi Kvirikashvili claimed that Georgia has taken the obligation and has to fulfill the 2014 recommendations of the "Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women": "The state has to set up a legally based quota for political parties to increase women representatives in local and national legislative organs" (See: www.interpressnews.ge).

It is important that in "the Parliament in 2015 two legislative initiative-proposals were registered. The first one was made by the initiative of the women's political working group (9 local non-governmental organizations were included). It was meant to increase the number of women in the political parties' lists proportionally to a mandatory ratio of 50/50 (men/women). As for the second one, it was presented by two members of the Georgian Parliament - Teimuraz Chkuaseli and Nana Keinashvili - they said that in the presented list of candidates 1 of 3 had to be a woman. We agree with the view of T. Chkuaseli and N. Keinashvili. Both proposals were accepted by the Human Rights Defense and Civil Integration Committee. It was accepted with 6 for and only 1 against. We have to say that despite the active discussions about gender equality at a legal level with regard to the protection of the international law standards – concerning the amendment of "Gender Equality Law" – and despite the great interest of the social organizations and some governmental representatives, there are still problems which could not be solved with the help of the financial aid provided by the "government". No matter the positive attitude towards the above mentioned issue, on 2 December 2015, the Legal Affairs Committee did not support the idea to be discussed in the plenary session, the amendments about "Georgia's Election Code". This plenary session was an additional event in order to ensure gender balance. According to the above mentioned bill, Georgian Election Code had to be added an extra norm.

According to the norm, each party which intended to take part in the parliamentary elections had to present proportional list, in order to keep gender balance, the number of woman representatives must be 1 out 3 quota system (that is not controversial only in Georgia; each side has its own opinion about it, of course). It would ensure to have at least 25 members of the opposite sex in the Georgian Parliament (session of Legal Issue Committee 2015). During his visit to Georgia, on 19 February, 2016, the United Nations representative for preventing the violence against women, Dubravka Simonovich (Head of European Extraordinary Committee who worked out the convention on preventing the violence against women in general and violence within the family), in her conclusion about the women's participation in political and family life, emphasized that she supported the increase of the mandatory quota to at least 30% due to the small number of women representatives in the parliament. The mentioned issue was discussed within the framework of gender equality and women strengthening in the 32nd session of the Human Rights Committee in Geneva this year. It is important that from July 1-5, 2016, for the first time in Georgia - the 25th Annual Parliamentary Assembly's Session of OSCE took place, and the topic was: "25 Years of Parliamentary Cooperation: Trust-building Dialogue". The urgency of our topic is proved by the fact that the delegates of the OSCE member states took part in the discussion about the gender equality issue in the exhibition center "Expo - Georgia", where archive photos of 5 women-parliamentarians from the period 1918-1921 were put on display.

CONCLUSION

It is a fact that despite the frequent discussions about women's engagement in the politics at current stage, the attempts of the social organizations and some of the governmental representatives were in vain. But, as far as this matter is concerned, it is possible that in the nearest future - as a result of the cooperation with the social organizations and the support of the politicians, by increasing the social awareness and with the appropriate support by the political parties – this issue could be defined at a legal level and therefore further promoted. All this will give a great opportunity to involve more women in politics.

The problem can be solved in the nearest future by a deep and precise approach to the existing reality. Here are a few recommendations:

1. The authorities have to be more responsible according to the European-integration framework and have an active cooperation with their partner countries.
2. In order to increase the social awareness of the issue, politicians, social organizations and political parties have to promote this issue actively in order to gain more support at the legislative level. It would help the indicators of women's engagement in the country's political life to grow.
3. In order to inform the society about the existing problems, non-governmental organizations and political parties should actively use the mass media as means of information dissemination.
4. With the help of the mass media create special sections with the aim to increase women's participation in political life and to raise awareness about women's rights protection.

5. Last but not least government has to introduce mandatory quota for an equal participation of women in the representative bodies. All this will enable women to influence the country's political processes.

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